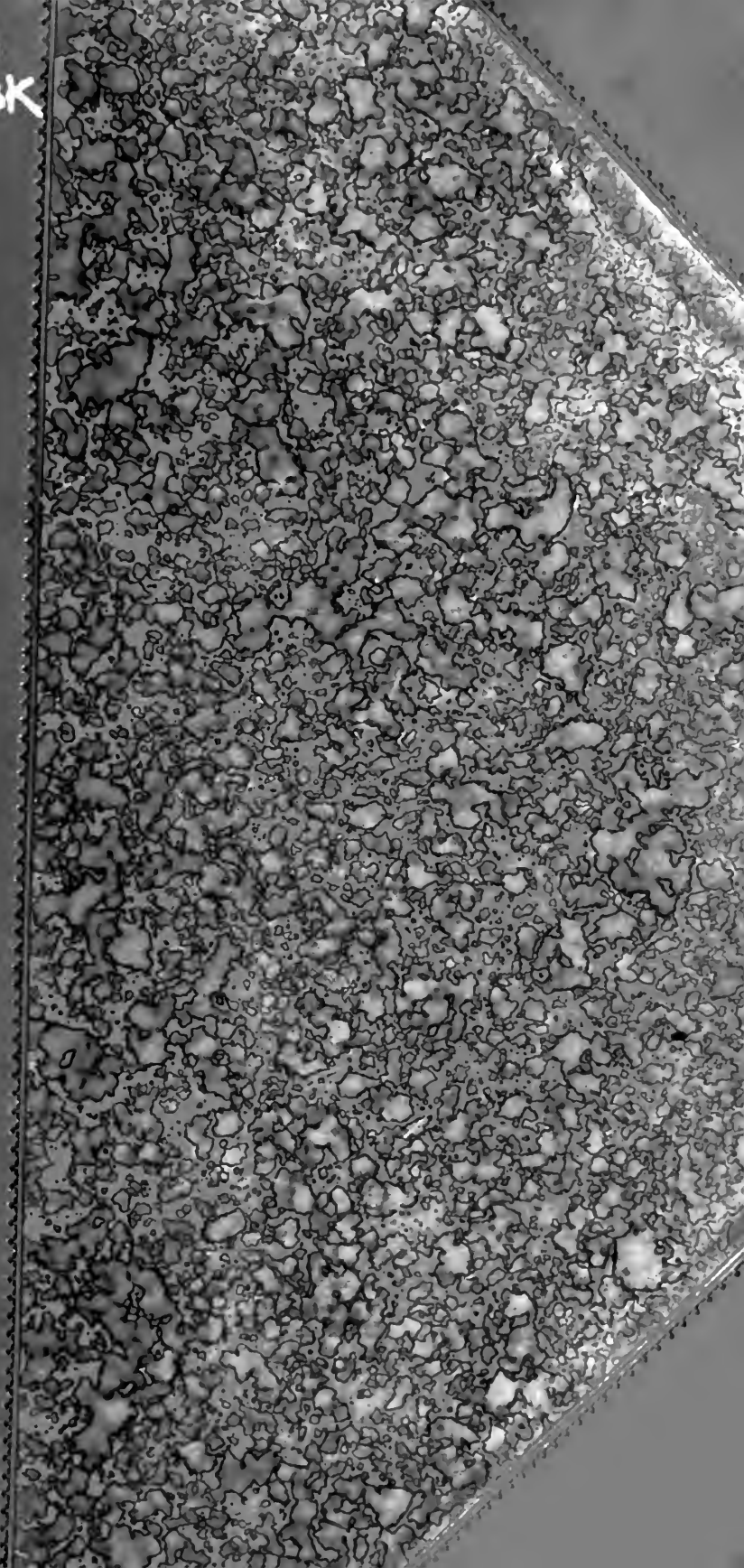
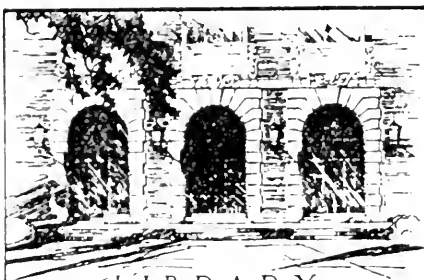


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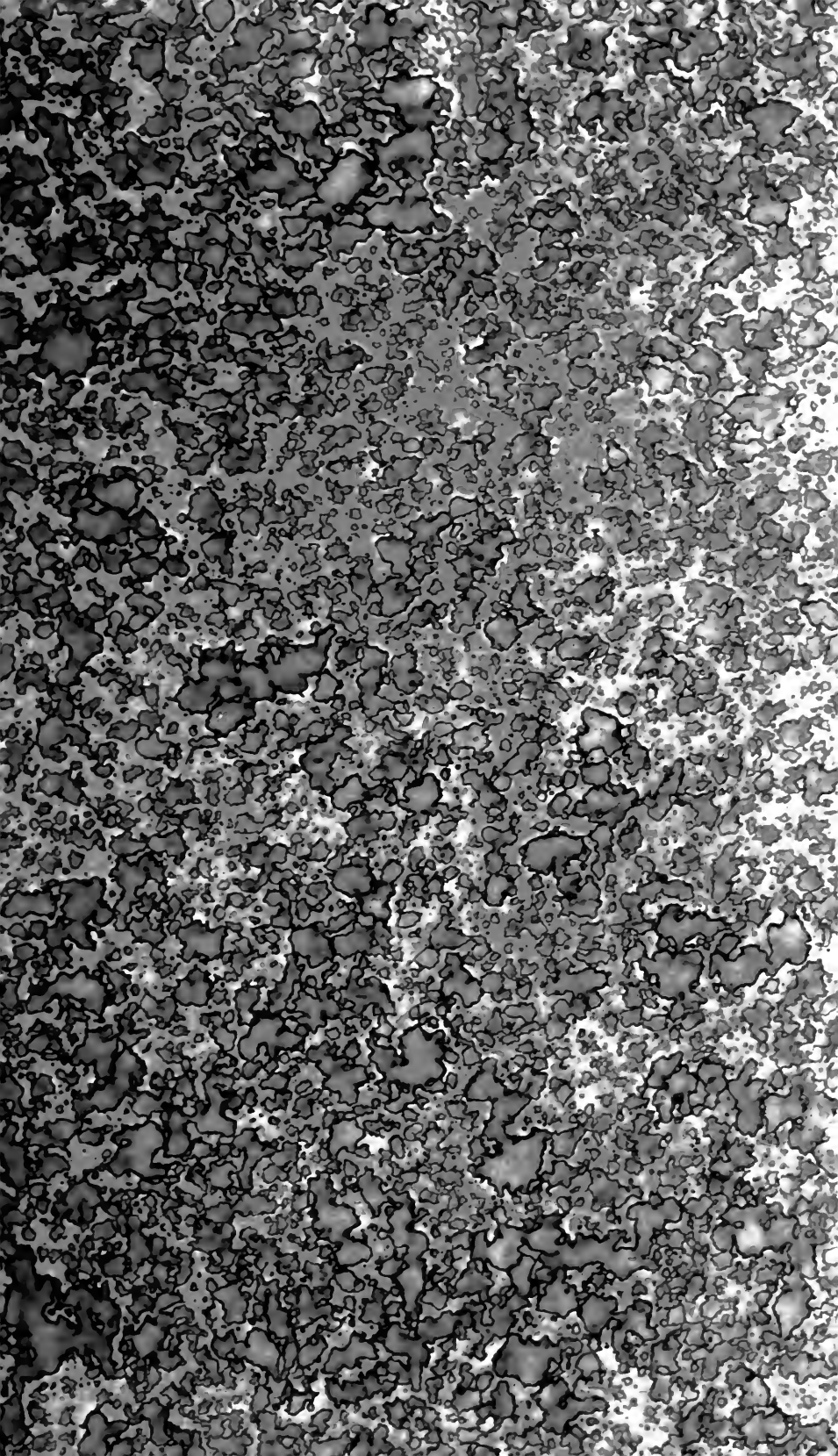


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K I N G ' S C O P E .

A NOVEL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

“MR. WARRENNE,” “MARGARET CAPEL.”

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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KING'S COPE.

CHAPTER I.

Gloom is upon thy lonely hearth,
O silent house ! once filled with mirth.
Sorrow is in the breezy sound
Of thy tall poplars whispering round.
The shadow of departed hours
Hangs dim upon thine early flowers ;
Even in thy sunshine seems to brood
Something more deep than solitude.

MRS. HEMANS.

THOSE very few persons who have had one great wish or motive in life utterly frustrated and disappointed, can alone imagine the desolate stillness of the heart with which Anne took possession of her estate at Datchley,

Although she had still something to fear in life, she felt that she had nothing to hope :

the plans to which her eagerness had assigned all the distinctness of certainty, so cruelly scattered, and the only part of her future life that threatened change, the dread lest she should be ever claimed by one whom she had ceased to regard.

As the green gate was thrown open, at which she had so often wistfully lingered, and her carriage drove into the winding shrubberies, she sat upright and looked fearfully around, as if determined to get over the pain of the first view at once. This was the moment so yearned after since her childhood, when she and Hugh, side by side, were to begin their fairy life together — a life in which there were to be no clouds in the sky, no shadows on the heart; when she was to live in the sunshine of a generous nature and an equal temper, such as she had never yet known — when she would be always understood, and considered, and indulged, and always have some one to

respect and be proud of, as well as to love.

She did not believe for a moment that such a lot might not have been hers ; she only asked herself, with a despairing effort to quiet the pang gnawing at her heart, what she had ever done to deserve that such happiness should befall her. She failed to imagine that Hugh could have disappointed her expectations.

She had been so fortunate as to secure Miss Elder as a companion ; for that lady had just quitted the situation she had held since she left King's Cope, and she gladly availed herself of a position far more congenial to her feelings and tastes, than trying to educate those perverse and ignorant little animals, concerning whom so many pretty things are said in poetry.

She had preceded Anne to Datchley by a few days, that she might find the place prepared for her reception ; and it was a comfort

to Anne, on entering the house, quiet with that peculiar stillness that belongs to unoccupied dwellings, to find herself welcomed by an old face and a friendly voice.

It was something to meet a person whom she had not seen for five years ; something to prevent her dwelling too keenly on the vacant hearth, where Hugh was to have given her his affectionate welcome.

It was a fine fresh evening early in June — the trees had not long been out in leaf, for the spring had been bitterly cold — and the lilacs and laburnums were bending under the weight of their blossoms : the double violets were not yet over, and the roses were stealing into bloom. The rustling air was perfumed, not with the rich lazy sweetness of the summer breeze, but touched with the fresh and capricious odour of spring flowers.

“ I had a fire lighted,” said Miss Elder, as she drew her former pupil towards the

drawing-room ; " I thought that, coming off a journey, you were likely to be cold."

" Oh ! so cold !" replied Anne.

Her tone, full of that suppressed feeling, which those only who have suffered can interpret, was understood by Miss Elder.

" Poor child !" she said, drawing Anne towards her.

The tone of sympathy quite destroyed the slight remains of fortitude that Anne possessed. She dropped her head on Miss Elder's shoulder and sobbed without restraint.

Miss Elder knew better than to check this burst of feeling in the outset. She suffered Anne's tears to expend themselves, and then gently led the conversation into other channels.

" We shall hardly have to make acquaintance again, as I had almost feared," she said, smiling, " after this long interval. You are so little changed."

" Me ! not changed ? " said Anne, looking up and drying her eyes. " Dear Miss Elder,

I hardly know myself. Did you expect me to-night?"

"I thought it most likely you would not delay your coming: there were not many attractions, I feared, in Mrs. Scawen's society, to detain you in London."

"No, indeed; but we were very civil: the little business we had to transact was soon over, and we parted with mutual good wishes."

"She settles in Leamington, I think."

"She has taken a house there for a year."

"Did you see your brother, Mr. Scawen?"

"Henry? oh, no; I should be very sorry to see him."

"I hope, dear Anne, you are at peace with all. Each new era of our life should surely, if possible, be entered on with such feelings as we should wish to carry to our final home."

"Yes, Miss Elder, you are quite right; and I am at peace, in the main sense of the word. But I cannot quite forget; and there is no

fragment of my being which is not opposed to every thought and feeling that he holds. There is nothing I have not striven against and prayed against, as I would against all that should debase the nature we have received from God, which is not his cherished and boasted quality. I might be weak enough to like what is unlawful—what is guilty, but never what is base. His nature is *all alloy*; but he has done nothing the world objects to, and it is only to you in confidence, that I explain this once my feelings regarding him; I will never touch on them again.”

Anne spoke with none of her early vehemence of feeling, but in a quiet, earnest tone.

“Have you seen the Mortons?” she said, quietly, after a pause.

“Yes, Mrs. Morton and her son called the day I arrived; they are both very pleasing; I do not wonder that you so much enjoyed your visit to Parkindale.”

“What would I give,” thought Anne, “that I had never gone near that unhappy place !”

“Mrs. Morton most warmly volunteered her assistance, and I assure you, my dear Anne, it was gratefully accepted, for my experience has lain more among verbs and participles than china closets and damask hangings.”

“You have got some very pretty china out of the closets,” said Anne, drawing to the tea-table : “these cups are beautiful.”

“We held a committee on the china,” said Miss Elder, “at which Mr. Morton assisted, and he decided on this set for daily use—the others were too splendid.”

“Mr. Morton !—did he ? I ’m very much honoured,” said Anne, smiling.

“Mrs. Morton seems to rely upon him for everything,” said Miss Elder, “even to the choosing a tea-cup ; it is delightful to witness their attachment, and certainly he appears in every respect a most excellent young man.”

“Ah !” thought Anne, “Mrs. Morton has

found the value of 'her good James' at last."

"And what has Mr. Morton been doing besides choosing my tea-things?" asked Anne.

"A great deal, in the parish," said Miss Elder. "I think you will be very much pleased with the schools: the children are so quiet and orderly that Mrs. Ford says she hardly knows the village again."

"Dear Mrs. Ford! how glad I shall be to see her;—and Master George; I hope he is still single: I hope to make up a match between him and my little maid."

"He is single, I understand, though very much sought. Mr. Morton has a great fancy for him, and has engaged his assistance in an adult school he has set on foot lately; and Mr. Morton tells me that several girls with very handsome doweries have given Master George reason to believe that he would not ask in vain."

“I have something to do, then,” said Anne, “with a touch of her old animation,”—“to checkmate the forward damsels with the doweries. Poor little Jane! It is very foolish to fall in love, and she was guilty of that folly at fourteen years old, and what is strange, our long absence, instead of making her forget, has every year strengthened her feelings.”

“And when my young friend has certain affairs of her own to manage,” said Miss Elder, smiling; “she will, I should think, have enough on her hands, without bringing about those of other people.”

This was a leading question; for Miss Elder naturally felt some curiosity to learn whether a beautiful young woman of three and twenty, with a fine estate, was entirely fancy free.

“I marry!” said Anne, decidedly. “That is perfectly out of the question!”

“At present,” said Miss Elder, smiling.

"*Now, and then,*" replied Anne, with emphasis. "I have no vocation for the state, Miss Elder."

It was no young lady's pretty faint denial, either in voice or expression.

"I see," returned Miss Elder, that it must require some very strong inducement to make you alter your mind. If you will give me leave, I will send a line up to the Rectory to announce your coming. Mrs. Morton begged I would, that she might present herself in the morning, if you were arrived."

"By all means," said Anne; "and I will ring for Jane to bring down my work."

Miss Elder was rising to ring the bell, but Anne turned round, and taking her by both hands replaced her on the sofa.

"Now once for all, my dear Miss Elder," said she, with affectionate earnestness, "you must let me wait on myself and on you too; you must not deprive me of the privilege of thinking myself the youngest. Look at Jane,"

she whispered, as that young person entered the room.

Miss Elder could not obey this injunction at first, for Towser carried a large embroidery frame, which completely obscured her diminutive person. But when she set down the large stand in front of her young mistress, and proceeded coolly to explore the pockets of her dress for sundry articles that she had trusted to those receptacles, Miss Elder looked at her with some attention.

She was decidedly under five feet in height, slight and agile as a fairy, and though her features were too sharp for beauty, yet her quaint blue eyes and bright complexion, together with her abundant yellow hair, made her an attractive-looking person. And the cool independence of her manner, so daring in a girl, was amusing enough in a creature who had more the look of an elf than a woman.

“ If I was you, Miss Anne, I would not sit up working to-night ; I would have a hot

cup of coffee and go to bed early;" said Towser, arranging the materials on the ledge of the frame.

"Jane," said Anne, suddenly, "do you think Master George will know you again?"

"Bless him! no, Miss Anne, I'm grown so tall," said Towser; who having gained two or three inches during her travels, entertained magnificent ideas of her own height.

"This is a very kind friend of mine, Jane," said Anne, "whom I hope you will always endeavour to please."

"Yes, ma'am," said Towser, and facing about she made a sudden courtesy to Miss Elder.

Miss Elder smiled good-naturedly at the little figure, and said,—

"Were you glad to return to England, Jane?"

"Very glad, ma'am. I don't think much of foreign parts. I'm sure at Venice I got such a cold I thought I should have had no

nose left;—going about looking at the pictures; and Miss Anne makes them a great deal finer than any they have got abroad; and go where we would, the houses swarmed with ——”

The name of a domestic insect was suddenly arrested on the lips of Towser by the simple expedient of clapping her hand before her mouth.

“ Well, then, Jane, I shall be up before ten,” said Anne.

“ Oh ! Miss Anne, please let me be Towser again !” said the little damsel. “ Now we have come home, and all — for the sake of the Homestead, do, Miss Anne.”

“ No, no, Jane, we settled it, now you are grown up,” said Anne. “ Towser was a good joke, and lasted a long time; but it does not sound so well for a woman as for a little girl.

Towser left the room with a reluctant step, muttering,—

“ We shall see what Master George will say to it.”

“ And now, my dear Anne, what are your plans ?” asked Miss Elder.

“ Oh ! I have no plans—absolutely none !” said Anne ; “ I wish to be quiet—to see no company—to rest for a time ; for though my last trial befel me in December, yet, up to the present time I have had no interval of repose ; there has been so much to be done, and everything painful. I wish to be useful, if I can, to make some people happy ; I desire to conduct everything about me, just as I think Hugh would have done. I wish to keep up the place as if it were still his—as if he were going one day to take possession of it ; I am sure he would have been so kind to all the old people and the children—so liberal to the working men—I can fancy—”

Her voice faded off, and she hid her face.

Miss Elder, who knew that the ordinary methods of exasperation, supposed to be con-

solatory, were utterly unavailing, remained silent; and she was not sorry when, shortly afterwards, Mrs. Morton and her son were announced.

“My little Anne!” exclaimed Mrs. Morton, as she entered the room.

Was that pale statue, with the dark hair braided back, and sweeping folds of black cachemire resting on the ground, and her ivory hands extended to meet her guest, her brilliant little Anne?

She was not half so changed herself. She was thinner, and her laughing face a little sobered; but there was a buoyancy in her nature that prevented the “serpent’s tooth” from eating so deeply into her heart, as into most other people’s. Directly her sorrow was over, she began to rise to the surface again. Frank had been despatched to Canada in a less extravagant regiment, and it was hoped, as it had often been hoped before, that he would now begin to spend only his own

money, instead of that belonging to his relations.

"I could not really wait till morning," said Mrs. Morton; "my good James, do you recollect him? Just the same sober face, is it not?"

"I remember him perfectly," said Anne, holding out her hand; "Mr. Morton could scarcely say as much of me."

"My dear Anne, what a lovely spot is the Parsonage," pursued Mrs. Morton; "I expect that you will envy me when you see it, for you know, I suppose, that I keep house for my boy till he finds a wife."

"My dear mother!" said Mr. Morton, gravely.

"Well, for an indefinite period," she replied; "but it was a sweet place when we first came, and all this spring we have been digging and planting, under the auspices of that romantic young farmer, Master George."

"He is a capital gardener," said Anne.

"I assure you he is quite James's right hand," said Mrs. Morton. "He is the most useful man in the parish."

"Next to Mr. Morton," said Anne, graciously.

"He has at least this merit above me," said Mr. Morton, — "I work in my calling, but he works out of his."

Mrs. Morton, whose quick feelings divined that Anne's return to England must be painful, though she hardly supposed that the loss of her brother would add much to her grief after so many years, went on talking, with a nervous desire, to keep up her spirits.

"The number of things I have to tell you, dear Anne, is quite marvellous. I don't know where to begin: you know, I suppose, who lives at Fenmore, on the other side of the hill, beyond Datchley wood?"

"A family named Smith, I think," said Anne; "I used to see them at church, years ago."

“Smith let it be!” said Mrs. Morton, laughing. “I wonder whether—oh! I know they will call.”

“I hope not; I wish for no society,” said Anne; “a very few friends—and no one can expect to have many—will comprehend all the intercourse that I desire.”

“‘Nothing so pleasing sweet as dainty melancholy;’ is that not the phrase of the poet?” said Mrs. Morton, gaily. “You are just like my good James, who renounces *parties* of all kinds, yet we rarely sit down to dinner alone.”

“Mr. Morton points out the distinction between a selfish immurement and an observance of the Apostle’s precept, ‘Given to hospitality,’” said Anne.

“Oh! my dear, you do not know my James!” said Mrs. Morton; “I am sure I did not until all our troubles came upon us, and then his conduct! so disinterested,—so generous,—and so considerate! There really

are *some* men who don't care for money,—who despise luxury,—who labour for some higher end than to aggrandize themselves,—who study the comforts, and much more, the feelings, of those they live with.”

“Some *Christians* ; I hope so,” said Anne, her eyes filling with tears, for she thought of Hugh.

“And he won't marry,” said Mrs. Morton : “I don't know why I should wish it, except that I think him deserving of every good thing, and I don't like him to go without ‘Heaven's last best gift ;’ but he thinks in his own case, for he does not arrogate to himself the right of judging for others, that a clergyman ought to remain single.”

“I do so cordially agree with him,” said Anne ; “I think a man who has a family and a flock depending on him for temporal and spiritual advancement, must run the risk of neglecting one or other claim.”

“Very true,” said Mrs. Morton ; “a man

who has a parcel of girls to marry, and of boys to put out into the world, how he must toil and moil in their service, and what a divided duty he must render, either to them or to those whose spiritual charge he has so solemnly accepted. But I am so delighted, for you think like my good James in everything. Now, do tell me about Mr. Clavering, dear young gentleman; did he ever finish his windmill?"

"Lord Inchcape; I have not heard any tidings of his windmill. The papers announced the death of Lord D—— while we were at Rome, but said nothing about the windmill."

"Oh! Anne, Anne, why are you not at this moment a viscountess?"

"My dear Mrs. Morton,—you to ask! who have seen Mr. Clavering."

"Oh! I always admired him extremely; I shall not take your part. Do you remember the Andersons?"

“ I was just going to ask after them,” said Anne.

“ They are both married—very well ; nothing particular : one is with her husband at Gibraltar : the other married an advocate, and lives at Edinburgh.”

“ And little Ella ? ”

“ Gone to India—married—dead—and only eighteen. Now, my dear James.”

Mr. Morton, who had been talking to Miss Elder, rose to take leave.

“ My dear Mrs. Morton, did you not bring a shawl ? ” asked Anne.

“ I, my love ? nothing, I assure you, but the scarf I have on. We call it June ; and I am so rustic, you have no idea ; I often go down to call on Mrs. Ford in the morning in my cap, without a bonnet—the lane is as private as one’s own garden, and then imagine the gossip we have over the gate, two old widows, with two such sons ! Her George is a year and a month older than

my James, but they both had the measles in September—there's a happy coincidence. We shook hands on the spot, directly that piece of news came out; and ever since, I have asked her for eggs and cream, without ceremony, whenever I wanted them."

"I shall send you home better wrapped up, notwithstanding," said Anne, who had rung for a shawl in the meantime. "We may call it June if we like, provided we treat it as March."

"You will do *me* a great kindness, Miss Scawen," said Mr. Morton. "My mother is so careless of herself, she is never without a cold."

"But it is so English, so patriotic," said Mrs. Morton, "and I am not Scotch, did you know that, my dear Anne; Scotch only by adoption—see how my James puts on a shawl? Isn't it nice? Will you two drink tea with me to-morrow? You ought, for I have been drinking tea with Miss Elder for the last fortnight."

“What do you say, Miss Elder?” said Anne, smiling.

“Miss Elder can’t say no; and, therefore, it is settled;” said Mrs. Morton, taking her son’s arm. “Oh! we are the earliest people in the world—we dine at five—so come in good time, and then I will show you my guinea fowls.”

CHAPTER II.

But by degrees, like stormy winds that sink
Softer and lower, of her voice the grief
Sank.

A faint streak
Of light at length broke in ; and gradually
And steadily it strengthened, and it strove
With the surrounding darkness.

DELTA.

IT was something like old times to see Mrs. Morton standing in her verandah ready to welcome her guests. She looked quite in her element clipping the roses and geraniums, and weaving a spray here and there into the trellis-work.

Anne was more herself too, the first shock was over, she was perfectly composed, even cheerful, but she was always quiet now. Miss Elder could hardly believe that graceful gliding figure, with her subdued voice, to be

the impetuous creature she had known at King's Cope.

"My James is not here to welcome the *Châtelaine* of Datchley," said Mrs. Morton; "he is reading to a valuable old woman who lives in the lane, who supplies us with honey upon occasion, the finest you ever saw—everything is fine at Datchley—and who calls me 'Madame Morton,' is not that delightful—'Lord a' mercy, is that you, Madame Morton?' I put a double allowance of brandy into her sago for the word."

Anne laughed and said, "I must engage Mr. Morton to direct me as to what I should give away—I am very ignorant in parish matters."

"So am I, my dear, except that I wear very quiet caps, and try to look like a parson's wife as much as I can; don't you think I have something the air of Don Abbondio's *gouvernante*?"

"Oh! Mrs. Morton! and I must tell you

that quiet little cap is wickeder than any I ever saw you wear."

"My dear, do not destroy all my castles in the air! James, what do you think, Miss Scawen says my cap becomes me!"

"Cannot you return the compliment without my assistance?" said Mr. Morton, joining them. "Miss Scawen you have brought the warm weather with you."

"It is a little more like summer to-day," said Anne.

"How is Dame Bridgeman?" said Mrs. Morton.

"Much better; she will soon be about again. Those books, Miss Elder, are the very things I wanted—I have written up to town for a dozen copies."

Miss Elder was an excellent coadjutor to Mr. Morton, for she knew how to teach, and it said a good deal for his sense, that because she well understood her *métier* he did not reject her assistance.

"Now, warm as it is, we had better go in," said Mrs. Morton; "tea is ready, and we make a meal of it."

Every thing about the house showed Mrs. Morton's cheerful taste.—The drawing-room light and airy, with worked muslin curtains, and stands of beautiful flowers.—The reading-room beyond, with darkened hangings, and oaken shelves of old ponderous books.

"We have a pretty good library," said Mrs. Morton. "All the Fathers—whom I can't read, for the good considerate souls wrote in Latin (fortunately), except those who were so obliging as to write in Greek—and all the old English divines, remarkably well bound. Anne, you can see a corner of Bishop Hall if you sit here, crimson and tarnished silver; but I assure you we are none of us Puseyites, though I maintain that James does have his great coats cut a little too long."

"You know my mother, Miss Scawen,"

said Mr. Morton; "I need not translate her remarks for you into plain English."

"And so nobody asks me who has taken Fenmore?" said Mrs. Morton: "it's very odd for a woman not to be curious, my dear Anne; don't you remember your old enemy Agnes Moray?"

"Agnes? is she in the neighbourhood? I own I shall be curious to see her again. Is she as pretty as ever? whom has she married?"

"She has married a distant relation of yours, named Captain Lascelles. You were abroad at the time—it must be nearly five years ago, and she has two children, a boy and a girl. As for being pretty, I never thought her so at all, she has such a horrible nose; but the men admire her."

"I dare say she deserves their admiration," said Anne; "what I remember of her was something very pretty."

"My dear, I never liked those little fussy figures; if you notice, they are generally

underbred; but men, so sensitive to ill-breeding in their own sex, are never aware of vulgarity in a woman, unless it is very flagrant. Only look at James and Miss Elder talking over their Sunday-schools. I am sure if any one would make him change his mind it would be the lady in the black poplin."

"My dear Mrs. Morton, you make me laugh:—but she is twice his age."

"Oh! that does not matter. I think it an advantage to a clergyman,—it shows he didn't marry for beauty. But what is this I hear from Mrs. Ford, about the Duke of Dalmaine. Mercy on us, Anne, what havoc you make in the Peerage."

"You *will* laugh, Mrs. Morton."

"So will you, some day, my dear Duchess; this accounts, naughty Anne, for your coldness to poor Mr. Clavering,—he, forsooth, was not high enough; oh, the deceit of this world! What *must* you go? Well, we shall be meeting almost every day. Good night."

It was very well Anne was prepared to receive the Lascelles, for they called upon her the next day; and Captain Lascelles was so associated with her brother's fate, that the idea of meeting was keenly painful to her.

Paler than marble, and as cold, with that rigid stillness which alone covers the quivering agitation of the nerves, she rose to receive her strange relatives.

A little fluttering, half-fashionable, overdressed woman, and a tall, middle-aged grave man, entered together.

"Miss Scawen,—good heaven! how like your poor brother," said Captain Lascelles, absolutely wringing Anne's hand as he met her.

This was not the best bred thing he could have said! but now and then there are situations where feeling drives breeding out of the field altogether.

Agnes extended her well-gloved hand with a patronising air.

"I wonder if you remember me, Miss Scawen," she said; "it is such an age since we met. It is singular to find so many Parkindale friends following our example, and settling near Datchley. We shall, I hope, make quite a little cheerful society among ourselves, if James does not contrive to spoil it all with his tiresome notions."

Now there was never less of a marplot than James Morton; for he was an enthusiast in actions, but not at all in words; he never uttered a word about religion, except in his vocation; for which habit he was, of course, blamed by some, and praised by others.

When people are a little over-wrought, there is nothing like a thorough worldly mind to bring them to their level—something coarse and common; and all the lace and satin above won't long hide the dowls beneath. Anne was able to answer Agnes in the same tone; to inquire after her children, to ask Captain Lascelles about a pair of horses she wanted,

to listen to all the nonsense Agnes talked, and all the sense her husband talked in reply.

The visit was returned, and friendly meetings were often arranged between them. Mrs. Lascelles' little boy was named Hugh, after his unfortunate relative, for whom Captain Lascelles had entertained a sincere regard;—and perhaps the name was enough to endear him to Anne, for she was never more happy than when she could borrow the child for a day or two, and rejoice in having him all to herself.

To do Mrs. Lascelles justice, she very gladly afforded Anne this indulgence for any length of time; and when Captain Lascelles drove over to fetch him back, protesting that his mother could not do without him any longer, he told a deliberate fib.

One of little Hugh's great pleasures was to go to the farm with Anne, and see Mrs. Ford,—if to drink tea, so much the better,—there to be shown the calf, and the last brood

of chickens, and to torture the young kitten, and to carry it about in a little straw basket couched on a bit of flannel, and to lift it out by the neck, and hold it up to look at the pigeons, or the sweet peas, or any object that pleased his own fancy.

Mrs. Ford and Anne agreed on these occasions that the child was a most wonderful creature, and would grow up something prodigious.

Holding Anne's finger, he would explore every corner of the empty barns, and the mossy orchards, with those sweet exclamations of delight that makes one's heart thrill to a child of that age. Anne never minded into what rough paths, or brambled hedge-rows her little companion led her. The sight of Master George would throw him into an ecstasy, for Master George would carry him into the stable, and set him upon the great horses that Anne dared not approach, and gather strawberries for him in the crown of his little straw hat,

and present him with long hazel sticks, supposed to be efficacious in protecting him against the cattle.

The little thing called Anne "Cousin," and she loved the merry sound of his little voice, and his pattering footsteps, absurdly. She taught him his letters, and two of Watts's hymns, by slow degrees, with the help of a great deal of fruit, and cake, and a very small Shetland pony (which her father's old servant led, while she held him on the saddle), as a kind of climax reward. It was no wonder that he laughed in his mother's face, when she used to threaten him with Miss Scawen, if he was ever unruly in the nursery.

She was gratified this summer, by a long visit from Lady Lucy. Lady Orrington had established herself in town for the season, —a practice she had discontinued for some years; partly, to consult a quacking kind of doctor, who professed to cure rheumatism,

and partly, as she said, "to keep her eye on Bob," who, deeply engaged in committees, and other Parliamentary business, was as little under his mother's eye, as any son need to be. But, she, giving herself the credit that the committees might more reasonably have taken, thought that her presence kept him away from all the gambling haunts where his father had been conspicuous. But the heat and fatigue of the season did not suit Lucy; and Lady Orrington was heartily glad to send her down to the quiet shades of Datchley, in compliance with Anne's earnest request, to be left with her, until the end of August; when Lady Orrington would suppose herself released from her surveillance over Bob, and would call for her, on her way into Lancashire.

In this way, Anne passed a very quiet, happy summer; Lucy was just the companion best suited to her; calm, gentle, accomplished, and well read. Miss Elder played in a first-

rate manner, and their musical evenings, were worth attending. Mrs. Morton was constantly with them; her son, now and then; and the Lascelles, who generally had a house full of company, found Datchley a very pleasant resource for themselves, and their friends. The summer was fine enough for pic-nics, for water parties, for sketching, without end. Lucy, and Anne, rode on horseback, Miss Elder used to call for Mrs. Morton in the pony phaeton, which the pretty widow drove with great spirit, and some little mischief; for Miss Elder, being very much afraid of the ponies, resigned the reins to Mrs. Morton, only to be still more frightened by the rapid way in which that lively lady whirled along the road. Never was country more thoroughly explored, than the beautiful district that lay for miles around Datchley. Every rustic church, and crooked tree, was transferred to Lucy's sketch-book. Every ragged child, and wrinkled dame,

found a corner in Anne's portfolio. The friends outsketched each other, as Mrs. Morton told them, and she bantered them, and laughed at them, and plotted for them most assiduously. There was a Sir Henry Forbes, who often stayed with Captain Lascelles, whom she had fixed upon for Lucy ; and a Mr. Rivers, who had a fine seat in the country, was meant for Anne. Sometimes she would change partners, and give Lucy Mr. Rivers, and Anne the other one, but she usually adhered to her first intentions. Lucy, who saw it was a waste of time, to talk sense to the gay Mrs. Morton, declined her good offices, by saying, that she would not have Sir Henry, because, as her two sisters had married baronets, she thought it would look ridiculous to have three baronets in one family, and she could not quite make up her mind to a commoner. For Anne, the very name of marriage, made her look grave, bringing to her mind the sword hanging over her

head by a single hair. And then Mrs. Morton used to say she was regretting Lord Inchcape, and finding out as she grew older, that young Viscounts did not grow on every hedge.

She was of infinite use to Anne, though. It was almost impossible to be low-spirited in her company; she put a gay face upon everything, and made a sunshine, not only of the Parsonage, but of every house she entered.

Lucy, too, was another creature since she had been at Datchley; her complexion had lost its sickly tint, and her fair cheek displayed as much of the rose as the lily. Keeping early hours, living in the open air, avoiding heated rooms, and never bored with matrimonial speculations, she was younger and prettier than she had been at eighteen. Mr. Rivers *did* make her an offer, to the great triumph of Mrs. Morton, who maintained,—

“I always said Sir Henry, or Mr. Rivers, I never left out Mr. Rivers, and as to your refusing him, that is a matter of taste, I never said anything about that. And now, there is Sir Henry left for Anne.”

One morning little Master Hugh was sitting to Anne for his picture, for she had learned to paint on ivory at Rome, and she did well everything that she attempted. Lucy was on her knees before the arm-chair in which the little rebel was seated; Miss Elder on one side with a box of *bon-bons*; Mrs. Morton on the other, talking, coaxing, and romping, to his heart's delight; now and then it was the young gentleman's pleasure to turn sharp round and hide his face against the back of the chair, especially as on those occasions Mrs. Morton was sure to come in with a perfect storm of kissing and tickling, and then Miss Elder would offer the *bon-bonnière* to his little fingers, and Lady Lucy would smooth his ruffled draperies, and Anne

would hold out indefinite promises of a ride on the pony. In the midst of all this, Captain and Mrs. Lascelles were announced.

"Spoiling my boy, as usual, Miss Scawen," said Captain Lascelles, coming to Anne's side.

"Painting him, Captain Lascelles," said Anne, "which he will tell you is a very different thing."

"It is wonderfully like," said Captain Lascelles; "I must petition for this miniature, Miss Scawen, for I have got a ship: I expect to sail in September."

"Hugh, you noisy tiresome boy!" said Agnes, as the little creature struggled out of the chair, and ran to his father.

Captain Lascelles laid his hand on the child's curly head, and looked down fondly at him.

"You shall have the picture, with all my heart," said Anne; "how fortunate that you think it like.—And do you really go?—How we shall miss you!"

“Agnes wishes to spend the autumn and winter at Brighton,” said Captain Lascelles; “I do earnestly wish, Miss Scawen, that you would consent to become her guest for some time. It is selfish, perhaps, but she is so giddy and young, and your society would be of infinite use to her; and then, the children, I should feel so happy if I knew your eye was upon them!”

“My dear Captain Lascelles, the idea of being useful would be a great inducement to me, but, little as you would think it, I am two years younger than Agnes.”

He did look a little surprised.

“I have made a very ungallant speech, I see that,” he said; “but in my estimation of your qualities, I overlooked the fact of your youth.”

“I really do not wonder at it,” said Anne, smiling; “but, besides the two years that you perceive I insist on, Agnes is a married woman, and therefore takes the lead in everything over

a poor single damsel like myself. It is she who would *chaperon*, she who would take precedence, and therefore all my wise plans and lectures would fall to the ground."

Captain Lascelles was not satisfied to drop his project, he urged Anne to promise something of a visit, he would not bargain for the length, while Agnes was at Brighton.

Anne looked at little Hugh, and bethought her of a sort of compromise. Her habits were so quiet, and her health so delicate, that she declared against becoming the guest of Agnes, but during the autumn she and Miss Elder would go for a few weeks, either to a hotel, or a house of her own, and there she could be as sober as she pleased, without casting a gloom upon anybody.

Captain Lascelles was grateful and satisfied with this arrangement. Perhaps he did not think it prudent to insist on bringing two such uncongenial minds into the same house; for Agnes, though on excellent terms with

Anne, looked down upon her exceedingly, as a single woman, and a pale woman, and a woman whose mantle had not the same trimming as her own, which came straight from Paris.

There was another strong inducement to Anne to spend some time at Brighton. Lady Orrington was commanded by her quack—whom she obeyed with a humble simplicity, that she would never have evinced to the first physician in London—to spend the autumn there instead of going to Lancashire, and she sent a warm invitation to Anne to take up her residence with her. Her motives in this were twofold:—she was anxious that Lucy should enjoy the society of her friend; and now that Anne was an heiress, she thought it would do Bob no harm, if his old fancy were to revive, to step into Datchley, and four thousand a year.

Anne gratefully declined the offer of being in the house with Lady Orrington; explaining

to Lady Lucy, that she desired to have Miss Elder with her, and that her doctor had warned her if she went to Brighton, to take a house in the lowest and most sheltered part, whereas she knew Lady Orrington meant to reside at the very top of the Marine Parade. Lucy acquiesced in these reasons, the more readily as she knew the facilities for meeting in a town like Brighton, and as Anne had promised her a long visit to Sherwood the next spring.

“It is really too bad to leave Datchley,” said Lucy, as she was standing with Anne at one of the casement windows; Mrs. Morton and Lady Orrington sitting over the embers in the grate; for, like an English summer’s evening, it was chilly within, while the air was soft without, and the moon shining brightly on the drooping beeches. “I find it hard to leave Datchley, as you did once, you remember, Anne, to leave Sherwood.”

“Oh! that time!” said Anne, shivering:

“but you have no trials before you, Lucy.”

“Not in prospect,” said Lucy, calmly; “but where one has been very happy and very quiet, it is natural to dread moving. I think if I had my way, I should cling here like a limpet.”

Mrs. Morton was edifying Lady Orrington with an account of Mr. Rivers.

“And Lord William coming home, Lucy. Perhaps he may land at Brighton? I don’t know whether it is a port.”

“No, he lands at Plymouth; to be sure, Anne, that would compel me to move. It would not be orthodox to have him at Datchley, I suppose?”

Plymouth! how the word struck upon Anne’s heart.

“Oh! Lucy, don’t love him too well,” she exclaimed.

“Dear Anne,” said Lucy.

“And I wonder, Lucy, what was your ob-

jection to this Mr. Rivers?" said Lady Orrington, from the fire-place.

"He did not interest me at all, mamma," said Lucy.

"He had a cast in his eye," said Anne.

"A regular squint," said Mrs. Morton.

"Now, look at those two girls," said Lady Orrington: "at their age, single, with their advantages, would not anybody suppose they were a couple of hunchbacks?"

"Not very easily," said Mrs. Morton; for certainly two more beautiful figures were seldom seen.

"And what does vex me, I must confess," said Lady Orrington, "that bold, forward, Arabella Fenwicke, Dalmaine's sister, has secured Henry Scawen. I suppose, Anne, I may speak of it, now it is coming on so soon? And the impudent chit stopped me the other day, and asked me if I did not begin to despair of Lucy? What do you think of that for a girl of nineteen?"

“Oh! it is very mortifying, Lady Orrington,” said Anne. “Lucy and I feel it very much; but we cannot, for all that, throw ourselves away on people who squint. It is a defect that would occasion so many misunderstandings.”

“You are a saucy girl,” said Lady Orrington, who was very fond of Anne; “but we shall see what you will both do at Brighton. It is to be very full this year. And, my dear Mrs. Morton, if you should ever have the rheumatism, Cosset is the only man to cure you. I will certainly recollect to leave you out a box of Cosset’s pills.”

CHAPTER III.

Mrs. F. Ay, ay, be wise, Mistress Jane. Do not you trust to time turning spleen to pity ; you 'll not find it so ; therefore, good gentlewoman, take heed !

A Woman never vex.

What joy has thou in thy loving ?
Is it a sweet or bitter thing ?

CHAUCER.

MEANWHILE the course of Towser's love, far from running smooth, seemed unwilling to run at all. Whenever Anne passed the evening from home, she was in the habit of giving Towser leave to drink tea with Mrs. Ford—a permission that young person would probably have anticipated, if it had not been formally granted ;—and she supposed the affair was in progress. She used to ask if Towser had spent a pleasant evening, and the reply was, for a time, satisfactory.

“Yes, Ma’am, thank you; Master George wanted to know about Messina, and Syracuse. I told him what *my* opinion was of those places. I think if the missionaries were to send out some mops and pails to those parts, they would do a deal of good. But Master George, who has only read what the books say of foreign places, takes it all for gospel, and asked me what I felt when I went up Vesuvius. I told him I felt I was a nincompoop for not staying at the bottom, as you advised me, Miss Anne.”

Anne supposed that these little narratives were working their way to the heart of Master George; and having latterly been a good deal engaged with her guests, she had not observed that Towser’s visits were much more sparing than formerly.

Lady Orrington, when she went to Brighton to secure her own house, was so obliging as to perform the same good office for Anne.

“I think I have made a pretty good bar-

gain for you," she said; "for there's no need to throw away your money, and the sum they ask for their wretched houses is absolutely criminal. I have taken you the best half of a house in Brunswick Terrace, which I am sure will be as much as you and Miss Elder can want,—and the other tenants will never trouble you; two sisters—miserable moping old invalid maids—a perfect warning to you and Lucy."

Her brother Henry's marriage with the Lady Arabella Fenwicke, took place at the close of the season. Anne was invited to be present, but she excused herself on the plea of her health; and as the present of jewels which she sent the bride, appeared to Henry to be as expensive as the occasion demanded, he was very willing to accept them instead of her company.

It was an excellent marriage. He had a fine estate, and she had rank; they were both of ancient birth, and both handsome.

They were selfish and insolent, and avaricious in an equal degree; for this latter quality, which used to be considered one of the failings of age, is now perfectly developed in young people. But as it is the custom to be decent, and they were great observers of custom, they were models of good conduct in every respect: they went to church punctiliously, and gave away exactly enough coals and blankets in King's Cope. They cared for nobody! not even for each other, but they showed a monstrous deal of fondness and consideration to one another, as the readiest way of getting a return for these commodities, and the easiest means of passing smoothly through life. The Duke of Dalmaye was worth a dozen of them both, and yet he had made himself such a bad character, that people were apt to look grave when his name was mentioned, unless they had marriageable daughters.

The day before Anne was to go to Brigh-

ton, she was sitting in her dressing-room, watching Towser pack, and wrapping up some few trinkets herself, to which she attached an especial value.

"Well Jane, do you like the idea of going to Brighton?" she said.

"Yes, Ma'am; I have no objection to go to Brighton, or to Rotterdam, or to Rome," said Towser, jerking her head very much.

"What, you would like to travel again?" said Anne.

"I don't care if I did," said Towser; "I don't care if I got my neck twisted either."

"Why, Towser, what's the matter?" said Anne.

"Nothing, Miss Anne, only I wish I was dead!" said Towser, desperately.

"Oh! Jane, that is very wicked!" said Anne.

"I do," said Towser, stamping her foot on the top of the leather trunk she had just closed; "and I wish somebody else was

dead,—and somebody else, besides! three people,—so there!” And folding her arms up in her apron, a sign with her of the last stage of determination, she stood confronting Anne, resolutely.

“Jane! Jane!” said Anne, half laughing, “I shall send Mr. Morton to you!”

“Ah! I’d give him a job if I had my way—he might bury us all handsomely together,” said Towser, her eyes flaming.

“Pray, Towser, am I to make one of the party?” asked Anne, with a very natural curiosity.

“Bless you, no, Miss Anne!” she replied: then turning round to her only remaining portmanteau, she began to count over the contents.

“Shall you want both your India shawls, Ma’am? your velvet cloak is in the *carton* down stairs—and you wear your silk mantelet to-morrow.”

“If you would like to step over to the

Homestead this evening," said Anne, "I can spare you very well. Mrs. Morton drinks tea with me; and you will return before I shall want you at night."

"No, thank you, Ma'am," said Towser, shortly.

"It will be a long time before you see them again, you know," said Anne.

"So it will, Miss Anne, a precious long time," returned Towser: "I like Missis very well; and if she likes to come and see me she may, but catch me going to the Homestead again."

"I suppose there's some mystery, Jane," said Anne, locking down her jewel case; "I do not wish to know it, unless I can be of use to you."

"Thank you, Miss Anne. I had rather tell you," said Towser, standing erect, with her arms dropped, and her head raised; "and then you will see what I'm come to, and that you can help me no more than a baby;

though if Master George thinks I am going to peak and pine after him, he is very much mistaken in his man !”

“ Master George !” said Anne.

“ Ah ! it was all very well when I first came home,” said Towser ; “ it was ‘ Towser can’t you come to-morrow evening,’ and ‘ Towser, suppose you and my mother take a walk together,’ and always listening to what I had to say about those nasty foreign parts. But now he is always out at Mr. Morton’s, bothering with a parcel of plough-boys, teaching them to read and write, and making up to that sly Scotch hussy of Mrs. Morton’s, who comes sneaking into him, bringing him a cup of coffee—so deceitful !”

“ Dear me, Jane, I’m very sorry,” said Anne.

“ She pretends, ma’am, that she is a cousin of Mrs. Morton’s, a regular lady, and Master George is so fond of the gentlefolks. What

made him abide that little brat of a Duke? Simply because he *was* a Duke. And who is Master George? Why, some say his father was a pedlar, and some say a milk-man; but it is very certain that Mrs. Ford never talks about him, so he could be nothing very grand."

Anne could not help smiling.

"And so, ma'am, I shall be glad enough to be out of the place. I saw Missis when she was up here, this afternoon, and I wished her good bye. What a beautiful French clock that is, you gave her for her parlour. Won't Master George be proud of it?"

"I do not think Master George is proud, Jane," said Anne; "I think you mistake him."

"I don't know anything about him, Miss Anne," said Towser. "I have not seen him these three weeks, and I hope I shall never see him again."

And having locked the portmanteau, she

whirled out of the room, and sent one of the housemaids, a middle-aged woman, entirely at her beck and call, to tell Anne that Mrs. Morton was arrived.

“No, I cannot come and see you at Brighton, my dear Anne,” said Mrs. Morton, as they loitered over the tea-table; “that is impossible, for who is to make my James’s tea?”

“And I suppose Mr. Morton will not be induced to come with you, if it were only for a week,” said Anne.

“Out of the question, my love; here he is wedged, but I trust to hear perpetually of your conquests, if not through you, through Miss Elder. You will write an appendix to Anne’s letters, won’t you?” she added, “just to tell me all the bits of news Anne is too shy to tell herself.”

Miss Elder promised.

“And I hope you will capture somebody very brilliant,” said Mrs. Morton. “I have not given up all hope of that dear Mr. Cla-

vering. I never shall call him Lord Inchcape. Do you know, Anne, when I think of him, I am always reminded of a very different person : a young man you may recollect meeting at Parkindale, named Hardwicke. He used to be sadly ruffled by that young gentleman."

Anne's face was dyed so deep a blush, that Mrs. Morton was quite surprised. But she was not a person to keep her surprise to herself.

"Look ! Miss Elder, isn't it beautiful ? she said. "She always looks like an angel, but if you want her to look like the very handsomest of mortals, you know what name will work the spell."

"I do not like the subject," said Anne. "I have had more annoyance about Mr. Clavering, my dear Mrs. Morton, than you can imagine."

"Well, then, I won't plague you. But do you know, Anne, that I have often thought

since, you had the narrowest escape of falling in love, that ever mortal had, little as you knew it yourself; and so thought Mr. Clavering, or I am mistaken."

Anne managed to turn the subject as quickly as possible.

"Pray, Mrs. Morton," said she, "can you tell me whether Master George is paying his addresses to your maid?"

"La! my dear, that red-haired thing, poor Lisa? Not that I ever saw or heard. I always fancied him a second Hippolyte. But that won't agree with your projects for your little elf! However, she will pick up a smart serjeant at Brighton, and that will do as well."

"I hope it may," said Anne; "but I assure you she has refused two or three good offers for the sake of Master George."

"Well! good bye, and good night," said Mrs. Morton, kissing her. "It is a chance if I ever see Anne Scawen again: but Miss

Elder, if you love me, take care that she writes herself, Anne Inchcape."

Mrs. Lascelles had preceded Anne by a few days to Brighton. She was in a square that did not face the sea, and she had no carriage ; it was, therefore, very convenient to her to be much with Miss Scawen. She had planned for herself, a very nice season, with the additional *éclat* of talking about the heiress of Datchley everywhere. She bore the absence of Captain Lascelles like a Roman matron ; never alluding to the subject supposed to be always in her thoughts, and hearing the rough autumn winds, which made little Hugh talk about "poor papa," with the Spartan remark, that it was a wonder those thin Brighton houses were not blown over their heads. She was at Brunswick Terrace when Anne and Miss Elder arrived ; kindly insisting on making tea for them, and offering to procure tickets for two or three balls and concerts about to take place.

Lady Orrington and her daughter were staying at a friend's house in Kent for a fortnight, and Lucy left a letter for Anne, which Mrs. Lascelles gave her saying,—

“Read it directly, dear Anne. I long to hear about that darling creature. Is Lord Orrington likely to be at Brighton? Do they mean to be gay? are not any of her brothers going to pay them a visit?”

Anne, who knew Mrs. Lascelle's love for Lady Lucy would have been equally extended to any other lady inscribed in the peerage, smiled and opened her note.

“No! they mean to be very quiet, my dear Agnes,” she said, speaking as she read. “Lord Orrington comes to them a little before Christmas. Lord Robert is in Yorkshire, on a visit to Lord Inchcape—and—”

Her breath almost stopped, her very lips turned white. Such a strange pain; she faltered, trying to smile, as she caught Miss Elder's anxious eye fixed upon her. For Lucy

went on to say that Lord William's regiment, ordered to Brighton, had already come, — and in that regiment was the person she most dreaded on earth—Arthur Hardwicke !

CHAPTER IV.

Raisoun. Know'st him no more ?

L'Amaunt. Naie, certis I—

Save that he yafe me rulis there

And went his waie, Ine wist where :

And I abode, bound in balaunce,

Lo, there a noble cognisaunce !

CHAUCER.

ANNE's first impulse on reading this letter was to turn round and go home again ; but a little reflection showed her that she could hardly do a more foolish thing. If he had any inclination to follow her, it would be as easy for him to do so at Datchley as at Brighton. Since he had arrived in England, it was better that an opportunity should come for explanation, if he desired any.

On this one point she could not ask advice

of Miss Elder or any other person; she must rely entirely on herself.

Her father had furnished her with a letter in case of need to a lawyer of eminence in whom he had great confidence; thinking naturally that it would be more agreeable for her to have the case stated by himself than to have to explain it personally: and she sat in her dressing-room long after the embers had died out, turning over this letter and thinking what was best to do.

And a restless impatient desire to see him once more, mingled with an interest that she tried to disguise from herself, that she assured herself again and again was no remains of love, would have sufficed to retain her in the place, if she could have quitted it (which would not have been easy) without exciting the astonishment of all her friends.

Agnes came down the next day with little Hugh in her hand, full of projects. Anne begged her to stay to luncheon, and to drive

with her afterwards, with the little boy, and she would discuss with her what should be gone through, protesting at the onset against a good half of the programme.

“Why, my dear,” said Agnes, “you have been living in a wood. I have given you the rest of this week to recruit yourself, and next week two sorry concerts, a ball, and a race : what would you desire ? We must see to day if there is anything wearable in the shops. Green leaves in your hair, that I decide upon, —they look so well in slight mourning. You naughty boy, if you don’t sit quiet, I will never bring you to see Miss Scawen again.”

“Then she will come to see me,” said Hugh, coolly.

“No, she won’t ! for mamma won’t let her,” said Agnes.

“I am afraid of him in the balcony,” said Anne, gently withdrawing him through the open window ; “he was climbing up the iron-work.”

"Come in this minute, you plague! Now these concerts;—Anne what do you say? and the races—you will, you cannot refuse to go one day to the races—I declare I'm so vexed, I don't know one of these officers, I must see and get acquainted with some of them by next week."

"Not if I am to be of your party, my dear Agnes. I could stand anything but a set of officers round the carriage," said Anne.

"Cousin, may I go?—may I? mamma will take me if you go," pleaded little Hugh.

"Yes, if cousin Anne goes, otherwise I promise you I shall not undertake you," said Mrs. Lascelles.

"Well then," said Anne, who could seldom refuse his begging eyes, "Hugh shall be my cavalier."

"But the ball, dear Anne; I will say nothing about the concerts if you will but go to the ball. I cannot go *quite* alone; and

you know the life I led at Fenmore, nothing but little sociable parties, not even a carpet dance,—and all these new waltzes, that I'm dying to practise; now do this once oblige me, and I'll be grateful to you all my life."

It is possible that Agnes would have knelt, if Anne had not comforted her with the assurance that she would go with her to the ball, if she was not required to dance,—a reservation that Agnes willingly admitted.

"It will only make you more thought of, and followed," she said; "if I were not so fond of dancing I'd do it myself. And now let us drive to the library, and put your name down at once."

"Could not I wait till Monday?" said Anne.

"Why, my dear, if you like,—only I do not see the sense of waiting. Shall we drive on the cliff?—indeed there is no where else to drive. And allow me to stop at the library

for a novel ; for I can tell you *I* don't mean to wait till Monday."

The carriage stopped before the library, and Agnes descended, her dress fluttering, and her head turning from right to left, with that indescribable air that marks a woman whose disposition is not very correct, whatever her character may be.

There were three officers standing under the verandah ; one of them was teasing a parrot in a cage, while the other two were stamping and laughing violently. Mrs. Lascelles favoured them with a look in passing, to which they responded by an audacious stare and sundry audible remarks on her personal appearance. Anne leaning back in the carriage, and, keeping a grasp on little Hugh's frock lest he should fall out, looked nervously towards the group of officers. Two of them were dark,—neither could be the one she feared, but the other one was light, with high features ; she was not very near, and her richly

worked veil, which she wore down, obscured her sight a little ; but she felt sure that she could never forget or mistake a countenance so distinctly impressed on her remembrance. That his manner was altered, she was led to expect,—a dissolute life must leave its traces there,—but she must recognise his face directly. If she was but a little nearer, she could decide at once ; but he was too far off, and his companions were just in her way. And moreover, she did not venture to turn her head, for the rudeness of their behaviour to Agnes, made her anxious not to let them think that she was impressed by their appearance.

She turned to the other side, and looked down upon the sea. But the screams of the parrot, who was now thoroughly provoked, attracted little Hugh, and he leaned over the door, so that Anne was obliged to sit up and hold him round the waist, if she did not wish to see him under the wheels.

“Cousin, what is that bird ?” he cried.

"A parrot."

"It is all green and red."

"So it is ! "

"What are those men doing to it ? "

"Teasing it, my dear."

"What for ? "

"I do not know."

"Shall I tell them to stop ? "

"No, my dear."

"Why not ? I tell Jack Ridge not to tease the pigs."

"Yes, but Jack Ridge does not know better."

"Do these men know better ? "

"Yes, most likely they do."

"Oh ! oh ! it has bitten that man's finger."

"Look at that ship, Hugh ! " said Anne, who saw that the child's exclamations and animated gestures, were drawing the officers' attention to the carriage.

"Oh ! cousin, he is pulling the feathers out of its tail ! "

"I hope not," said Anne. "Do you see those fishermen?"

"No, cousin; because I am looking at the bird."

Anne saw that it was hopeless; she began earnestly to wish that Mrs. Lascelles would come out of the library.

At this crisis the parrot, after a succession of shrill screams, distinctly uttered the words, "You be d—d." Upon which the officers, laughing more noisily than before, put their hands in their pockets, and paid each other some money. From which it may be inferred that they had a bet pending upon the parrot's utterance of that sentiment.

At the same time Agnes came sailing out with some books in her hand, passed them again with the same affected glance, and got into the carriage. One of them thought her worth the trouble of following down to the gate, and inspecting her feet as she mounted the steps of the carriage. Anne hardly dared

to look—yes, she was certain—it was he ! He did not see her at all ; he was too busy criticising Mrs. Lascelles' ankle.

“Suppose we drive on the cliff till dinner,” said Agnes.

Anne languidly assented, and they partook of that recreation for nearly two hours,—creeping up to the farthest limit of Kemp Town, and then going briskly down to Hove, and so on *ad infinitum*.

“Is this what they all do at Brighton ?” asked Anne, who observed hundreds of other people keeping her in countenance, but who nevertheless thought it the dullest work she had ever tried, dragging up and down a narrow road, with shabby houses on one side, and a very indifferent sea-view on the other.

“Yes ; isn't it nice ? ” said Agnes ; “ we shall know who all these people are in a few days. There is a coronet, and there is another, and another. That man is some-

body, I should think, by the look of his groom. Did you see those officers at the library? one of them called the other Ferguson; I knew some Fergusons at Edinburgh. If this should be one of the family, I would soon make acquaintance with him. What was I going to say—that child keeps trampling on my flounces. They had a pretty good stare of their own, that I must say. But, unless people are very frightful, they must put up with that.”

Especially when they invite it, thought Anne, but she did not express her notions, and after setting Agnes down at her own door, she proceeded home in a very dejected mood.

It was agreed between Anne and Miss Elder, that they should be no restraint upon one another.

Miss Elder had many friends at Brighton. One or two clergyman's families in particular, who gladly availed themselves of her zeal

and activity, in district visiting. Anne had no turn whatever for this occupation, she had no talent for imparting instruction, and to visit the poor, without instructing them, was in her opinion a vulgar display, or a more vulgar love of the commonest gossip.

As they took their places at the dinner table, Miss Elder tranquil and cheerful, Anne fagged and desponding, she could not help remarking the contrast to her friend, as soon as the servants had quitted the room.

“We have both met with our deserts to day,” she said; “I have been tired out in the pursuit of pleasure, and you, who have been doing nothing but good, are come back fresher than you went out.”

“My dear, I have not been doing any good,” said Miss Elder, smiling. “I believe we must ascribe our different conditions to our companions. Mrs. Elliott suited me, Mrs. Lascelles, I suspect, did not suit you.”

“To be sure, what a difference it makes,”

said Anne; "I shall not be able to bear it every day. I am so sleepy."

"Then you had better take a nap till tea-time," said Miss Elder, drawing a shawl carefully over her young charge, as she sank drowsily on the sofa.

Agnes kept Anne up to the mark. She procured her tickets for the ball, and a new bonnet for the races, and dragged her to a *Modiste* on the cliff, that she might choose herself a dress.

"Everything you have is very handsome," she remarked, "but *trop loured*. Mourning may be carried to an extreme. If I were you, I would order myself an immense bouquet of scarlet heaths, oh yes, red is admissible, ask Mademoiselle Leroux; now for heaven's sake, my dear, not one atom of black, unless you have anything very new in jet ornaments. And whatever we do, don't let us forget to put your name down at the library, nothing will go right till that is

done. You will subscribe to the pier,—we must learn when the band plays. Oh, dear, what a mercy it is we are out of Buckinghamshire,—a winter at Datchley would have killed me. My dear, what a very handsome man! no, not on that side, the other way, riding down the cliff, ah! now you won't see him at all, you've quite missed him."

Anne survived this misfortune, and brought Miss Elder the same account of a weary day.

"Certainly it was very different abroad," she said, "I could understand young people eager after pleasure there, but that dreary cliff, I should think, must be conducive to insanity; and yet, Agnes assures me, she enjoys it. To be sure, it is quite voluntary, so I suppose she does. Well, next week the Orringtons will be here."

The next morning while she was dressing, her maid brought her in a letter. She supposed it was from Agnes, and threw it on her

toilet till she went down to breakfast, when she took it up with several other things, and brought it in to read as she breakfasted.

While Miss Elder was skimming the *Morning Post*, she took the letter up—she did not know the direction nor the seal,—opened it, saw the name of Arthur Hardwicke at the bottom, and almost fell from her seat. But she was alone in this matter—it would not do to give way—to betray herself—she took it up steadily, turned a wistful look towards the window, where the mild October breeze was rustling the blinds and lifting them lazily up, giving broken glimpses of innumerable sparkling waves beyond, and with the cold dew standing on her forehead, read as follows :—

“ This is the second time I address you since our brief acquaintance in Scotland. Perhaps it is necessary to remind you of it, since you betrayed no sign of recognition when you passed me yesterday. Although you did not

reply to the letter I wrote you from Bombay, I cannot tell how far you were a free agent then. I supposed you so, as you were of age, and, I imagined, under your brother's care. Perhaps you could not reply to me. I entreat you to answer me now. I think it my duty to give you the choice of sharing such a home as I can offer. I beseech you to consider the subject gravely. We knew nothing of each other, then: we know nothing now; we may be the last persons each would select as a partner, but we can make no other choice. You may feel it a point of duty to reside with your husband, I would offer no hindrance to the fulfilment of your duty. Or time may have so altered your feelings as to render you averse to such an idea. I would not interrupt your tranquillity, as I fear I have already too much done. But decide, that I may know what to look to. I cannot bear suspense.

“ARTHUR HARDWICKE.”

Could any number of words have been collected, they could not have been put together to bear less the semblance of a lover's appeal.

It was evident that Arthur Hardwicke regretted his fate as much as she herself; but every line increased her boundless astonishment. What—the sot—the gambler—the profligate—could he write so seriously—could he assert the claims of duty so forcibly—even offer to receive her, should her conscience require such a step,—though it was evident he looked with dismay to such an alternative. A man must have some virtue and some sense to write such a letter, cold and bitter as it was. She felt a little less ashamed of her early choice. His was evidently a mixed nature. He had been led into a lower course of life by his associates, but in his heart he still retained some good and noble feelings. She had read of such persons being reclaimed and reformed by their wives, but though it sounded very well in fiction, she had always

been warned that such an attempt in real life was perfectly hopeless. Besides, she had not the health nor the buoyant spirits to fit her for such an undertaking. Animation, variety, playfulness, and the nerves of an ostrich, are among the least qualifications needful for such a task. She felt that she was just the sort of woman that such a man would hate and weary of, every day more and more. She had no one to consult; but she felt quite clear that her duty did not oblige her to accept his reluctant offer. Miss Elder had left the room, the servants had cleared the table without her knowledge. She took her writing-case, and at once sat down to put the seal to her fate; not at all with the fury, but with a little of the wounded feeling, of "a woman scorned."

"I hasten to reply to your letter, the first I have ever received from you. I cannot fail to give such a subject my gravest con-

sideration, and I thank you for allowing me a choice in a matter of such deep importance. If I thought my society could add to your happiness, I should feel called upon to set aside all idea of my own. As it is, no feeling of duty impels me to avail myself of your permission. We are better apart.

“ANNE LASCELLES SCAWEN.”

His letter was dated from one of the hotels on the Steyne. She addressed it to Arthur Hardwicke, Esq., not knowing what his military rank might be, and sent it at once by her servant.

She felt relieved of a prodigious care; gay and light-hearted, as if she had shaken off half a dozen years, for the first few minutes. She was secure, and nothing is so chafing as uncertainty. And then she began to harass herself with the thought that it was all over—all done with, and entirely closed;—the only romance, the only passion of her life.

She would have given half her fortune for peace and safety, a little while ago, and now it was come, and she had his own handwriting as a pledge for her tranquillity ; she began to think what a tame spiritless existence hers would be henceforward, until she caught herself laughing at the old jest of the widow, who refused to be comforted "because a bad husband was better than none at all."

Miss Elder, who came in with the quiet attire and long wicker basket, peculiar to excellent ladies at Brighton, and elsewhere, who are in the habit of conveying tracts and other stimulants to their poorer neighbours, complimented Anne upon her looks, which had been rather disturbed, and no wonder, when she last saw her, and suggested that she should drive into the country, if country could be found, instead of enduring another two hours of the cliff.

"I assure you I mean to give myself a holiday to-day," said Anne. "Little Hugh is

coming to me at eleven, with his nurse, and we first go to buy him a spade at the nearest toy-shop, and then I shall sit on the beach, while he amuses himself, till luncheon. I have got a delightful novel—‘Violet’—and I shall really enjoy myself, reading close to the sea, and watching the child; and then he dines with me at luncheon—shall you be in? And I lend the carriage to the invalid ladies down stairs, and play with Hugh until he goes home at five. Agnes, I am happy to say, is engaged to a morning concert with some friends; and I shall save myself for to-morrow, when I go to this horrid race and ball.”

Anne had made acquaintance with the ladies on the ground floor—the daughters of a clergyman,—sad invalids, with a slender income. She had found several means of doing them little kind offices, such as lending them her carriage, and sending them hot-house fruits; for she thought it was not only

the *very* poor, who are the poorest, and the most to be pitied.

“Cousin,” said little Hugh, as he trotted by Anne’s side to the toy-shop, “will you buy me a parrot?”

“Yes, my dear, if there is one to be had in the shop.”

“I mean a live parrot.”

“No, not a live one, it would make such a noise.”

“I know—I want it to make a noise.”

“But Mamma would not like it. Shall we see if we can find a wooden one?”

“Will a wooden one say, ‘you be —.’”

“Hush! hush! Hugh, you must not say those words.”

“I mean like the parrot at the library; I know what that one said.”

“Yes, but you must not repeat it, because it was something wicked.”

“Why did those men make it say something wicked.”

“We won’t talk of the parrot; look at these spades—will you like a little barrow?”

Hugh’s attention was diverted to the toys; he chose what he liked, and they walked towards the beach. As they were going through the railing at the entrance of the esplanade, a gentleman was just passing out.

“Cousin,” cried Hugh, pointing full at him, “that is one of the men who made the parrot say something wicked.”

The gentleman smiled good-naturedly at the child, and half stopped as if he had a mind to speak, but he did not see Anne, and she was thankful for her veil and her parasol, for she felt the colour rush all over her face. It was Arthur again; but close as they were, she felt sure that he did not recognise her.

CHAPTER V.

Traum' ich ? Ist mein Auge trüber ?
Nebelt's mir um's Angesicht ?
Meine Minna geht vorüber ?
Meine Minna kennt mich nicht ?

* * * * *
Geh ! Dir hat ein Herz geschlagen,
Dir ein Herz das edel schlug,
Groz genug den Schmerz zu tragen
Dass' es einer Thörin schlug.

SCHILLER.

THERE was one satisfaction to Anne in the anticipation of the race-day. Little Hugh was in the most outrageous spirits—the wildest state of delight imaginable. He was drinking tea with Anne the evening before ; and he could talk of nothing else but the horses, and his new hat with blue rosettes. After riding upon the sofa cushions, and his little spade,

and the footstools, and Miss Elder's wicker basket, and shouting,—so that Anne was obliged to apologise to the invalid ladies,—and expressing a wish to drive a tandem, composed of Towser and Johnson (the old man-servant), he fell fast asleep in an arm-chair, and was carried home in that condition.

The carriage was sent first to take up Agnes and the child, and then returned for Anne; and the sight of his happy dimpled face, leaning over the side of the britscka, reconciled her to her share of the morning's amusement.

Mrs. Lascelles' first glance was due to Anne's toilet; her splendid black cachemire and damask dress, her white chip bonnet, with its airy plume of Marabout feathers, attracted her half envious approval.

“I declare I'm quite out of conceit with this green capote,” she said, pointing to her affected little bonnet with its cluster of white Acacia; “there's something so *posée* in your

style altogether; but perhaps it is as much your air as your dress, and that black Chantilly fall over your face, I do think so perfect—so Spanish! and your parasol—I do wish I was in slight mourning; there's nothing like it."

"You look excessively pretty altogether, my dear Agnes," said Anne, sinking back in her corner; "and if you desire to content the gentlemen, you will achieve it better by a gay selection of colours, than by anything so sober as mourning."

"Why, of course, every one desires that; gentlemen are the only judges," said Agnes; "but I don't know why it is, I like your dress best. If I see another person with a thing, I always want it, even if my own is the prettier."

With this candid confession, Agnes took her *lorgnette* from its case, and adjusting it to her eyes, remarked, with much satisfaction, that there seemed to be a great many carriages on the race-course.

"There are two or three men I know who will be here, or I don't know what I should do," she said, "for some of the officers ride their own horses, and if one did not know their names, it would be horrid!"

"Are you cold, darling?" asked Anne, who had taken the precaution to bring a warm plaid to wrap round Hugh, in case the air of the downs should be too sharp for him.

"No, cousin, but I am very hungry," said Hugh.

"Hungry! how dare you, sir?" exclaimed Agnes; "when I assure you, my dear Anne, he dined before we set out."

"I did not eat a bit," said Hugh, pouting.

"I dare say he did not, he could hardly eat last night," said Anne, smiling; "there is Hugh's little basket under the seat, he may begin when he likes."

"No, sir, you shan't have it yet," said Agnes; "so vulgar to see him eating before

anybody is thinking of luncheon ; well, your cousin spoils you ; there, take a little piece, and make haste — I'm ashamed of any one seeing you."

"It is the fresh air of the downs," said Anne, as little Hugh, at the bottom of the carriage, half hid by the ample folds of her black damask, was plunging deep into his basket.

"Oh ! he is very naughty — he has been going on so all the morning, he has driven me wild," said Agnes ; "he wanted to take his spade with him in the carriage, and he had quite a fight with nurse because she took it away. I said I would tell cousin Anne, and now I have—I always keep my word !"

Hugh, seated comfortably on the sheepskin at the bottom of the carriage, with a large pear in one hand, and a slice of plum-cake in the other, stared up, first at his mamma and then at Anne, with the utmost gravity ; but finding that the charge brought against him

was not followed up by any attempt to seize his eatables, as he apprehended, he bent his broad-leafed hat over his basket, and set to work again. And now, under Mrs. Lascelles' direction, the carriage was moved to the part of the downs she thought proper to patronize, guided in some measure in her decision by a drag belonging to the regiment quartered at Brighton ; for she reasonably thought they would choose a fitting situation for overlooking the race, and at the same time she gave them, very liberally, an opportunity of profiting by a sight of her pretty face and gay toilet. Anne, who was perfectly new to any public English amusement, was quite unconscious of the advantages of their situation ; she did not know a drag from a stage-coach, and could not distinguish an officer from a civilian unless she happened to remark his uniform.

Very near the officers' drag there stood a britscka, in which two ladies were seated, very noisy, very much dressed, very highly painted,

whom it would require a great deal of charity, and a still larger share of ignorance, to take for anything respectable. Such scenes are common upon every race-course. The most careful mother cannot dictate what carriages shall be close to hers. The oaths from the drag, where the officers felt themselves released from the restraint of female society; the bad grammar and violent laughter from the britscka, were as distinctly heard in Anne's carriage, as if all the parties had been assembled together in the same room.

Anne, being informed by Mrs. Lascelles, with pitying kindness, of the nature of the drag and its owners, felt not a little awkward that they were so near. Arthur Hardwicke would most likely be there during some part of the day—perhaps was there at that moment; but she did not venture to scrutinise too closely the noisy group before her. And to place herself just in his way, after the very decided correspondence that had just passed

between them, would appear capricious or indelicate. She would gladly have moved farther off, but her horses were taken out, and she was not that sort of woman who is always wishing to do something impossible or inconvenient.

She wondered, with a feeling of terror, whether he would recognise her now that they were so near, and for so long a time. No : she thought that impossible ; she was so much altered ; and she trusted a good deal to her veil—it was natural enough that she should not have forgotten him—women always did remember so tenaciously. He certainly was not on the drag, that she had managed to ascertain ; and Hugh was making several inquiries concerning the man who teased the parrot.

Agnes was now experiencing as much happiness as mortals can hope to enjoy in this life. She had surmounted her jealousy of Anne's dress, on perceiving that the officers

stared at *her* perpetually, and talked of her among themselves ; never so much as casting a look upon Anne. And then she looked forward with a pretty unconsciousness, as if the drag had vanished, and there was nothing but the green country beyond. Two or three gentlemen of her acquaintance had made her out, and were quite fixtures on her side of the carriage ; there was a very handsome luncheon, thanks to Anne's excellent servant, who never forgot anything ; for her head was so occupied with other matters that she had given no directions for it ; and Mrs. Lascelles, not at all insensible to good cheer herself, was quite aware that the excellent champagne, in which she pledged her cavaliers, gave her an additional charm ; she was betting gloves with one—helping another to lobster salad, condoling with a third, who had lost in the race, and scolding little Hugh for wanting some of the raised pie ; and she agreed with every one that it was a most delightful day.

At last she bethought her of Anne, whom she was always pitying for her want of knowledge of the world; and fancied she was watching the charming inmates of the opposite britscka.

“ My dear Anne,” she said, touching her arm, and speaking in a whisper, “ Don’t look at those ladies; they are not proper.”

Anne smiled, for if ever there was a self-evident fact, that was one; and turned her attention to little Hugh, who was eating prawns, and persisting in putting the heads into his pocket.

Just then an officer came up to the drag, and perceiving that there was eating going on upon the roof, began to climb up. He was drest in a racing costume, over which he wore a paletôt, and a hat in place of the jockey’s cap, which he carried in his hand. On seeing him the two ladies set up a cry, and the rosier of the two apostrophised him in the following manner,—

“ Oh ! 'Ardvicke, 'ow 'andsome you look ! ”

“ Hardwicke ! ” Anne sank back with a sickness at the heart that she could scarcely support ; while the officer instantly dropped off the drag like an acorn from a bough, and came to the side of the ladies' carriage. If that man should ever change his mind and claim her ! But she rallied from the thought. If his letter had been a fair specimen of his feelings, she might still, perhaps, excite his admiration ; but the gaudy creatures before her, were evidently more to his taste. She heard the loud laughter, the jests that passed between him and his familiar companions, with a shudder.

At last, he contrived to tear himself away, and again mounted the drag ; there reposing on the roof, he began to eat and drink, and kept steadily at it, too, for a period of time that would astonish a good many hearty farmers. Anne could now venture to look at him unobserved. If it is possible to adopt one

costume more repulsive than another, it is that of a jockey, which that gentleman wore, half concealed by his paletôt; for he was going to ride a certain horse in the last race of the day. Although older looking than when they parted, he was much younger than she had expected after an absence of eight years, divided, she imagined, between India and the Cape. He really did not look more than three or four and twenty; but then it was evident he had not fatigued his intellect much during that time. Now that she could observe him at leisure she could trace the semblance easily enough. The same light hair—the same high slight nose—the same long blue eyes—the same slender figure—the same easy gesture that she had admired so much when she was fifteen years' old. She had never seen him hungry then, or she would have formed a much more moderate opinion of his attractions. He was now growing very tipsy, to the great satisfaction of his companions. Laugh-

ing, swearing, betting, he seemed not to know what folly to commit next. He was hardly able to scrawl down the bets in his book which his friends were kindly pressing upon him. At last, fortunately for his purse, he was told that it was time for the race in which he was engaged. He had now become pathetic. He resigned his hat and paletôt to a groom, who put them inside the drag, and was led off on the arm of a friend, with the air of a man who is going to the scaffold.

Anne, overpowered with shame, for try as she might she could not quite disunite her name from his, leaned back in the carriage, covering her face with her hands. Mrs. Lascelles, engaged in an animated conversation with the only gentleman left, did not perceive the dejection of her friend. It was a hurdle-race, and Mrs. Lascelles was persuaded to stand up on the front-seat that she might see better all the leaps that the horses were to make. Hugh, who was tired of the horses, was ar-

ranging all the heads of his prawns on the seat from which his mamma had risen, as happy as a king; and Anne was left for some minutes to her own reflections. At last she was startled by a scream from Mrs. Lascelles, echoed by louder cries from the opposite britscka, coupled with the exclamation, "Oh! poor 'Ardwicke!—did you hever!" from which she inferred that some accident had happened to that gentleman. Her heart beat quick; she saw at a distance, upon the course, a sort of heap—a man and horse together, on the other side of a broken hurdle—then a rush of people to the spot. She could hardly breathe; but she could not have defined the mixed sensations that oppressed her. Then the crowd parted, and two persons were seen carrying a man in the direction of their drag—a man in a pink satin jacket. There was no doubt it was *poor 'Ardwicke*, as the ladies called him. Several officers were with him: as soon as they came to the drag they

lifted him in, without paying any attention to the tender ejaculations of the ladies ; and then three officers got in also, to keep him company, and prevent his spirits from failing, if he should chance to recover his senses ; and to facilitate that process, they all smoked as hard as they could, which, as the inside of a drag is not quite so large as Westminster Hall, was perhaps the readiest means of vitiating the air around the patient.

“ Good gracious !—I wonder who he is !—I wonder if he is dead !” exclaimed Mrs. Lascelles, sitting down upon the prawns, and then starting up and cuffing poor Hugh for the injury inflicted upon her lilac mantle. “ I wish I had never brought that wicked child ! Ah ! you may cry, and hide behind ‘ cousin ! ’ You shall go to bed the minute we get home, without one bit of supper ! You had better take out the cushion, Johnson, and shake it well ! ”

Order being restored, and Hugh having

nestled into Anne's shawl, who almost unconsciously pressed him to her side, Agnes began to speculate again upon the name and condition of the unfortunate officer.

"There is a soldier of the regiment," she exclaimed; "I declare I'll ask him. Pray," she said, leaning from the carriage, "can you tell me the name of the gentleman who has met with the accident?"

"The soldier, who was standing with his arms folded, watching the process of suffocation going on in the drag, as one might watch the destruction of a hive of bees by sulphur, turned round politely, and said,—

"It is Captain Hardwicke, ma'am."

"Is it very serious? He is not killed, is he?" asked Mrs. Lascelles, eagerly.

"No, ma'am, he is not killed yet," said the soldier, quietly regarding the drag; "but I think he soon will be."

Nothing could proclaim the insignificance of Captain Hardwicke more plainly than the

extreme indifference of this soldier's manner. So thought Anne. He was neither liked nor hated by his inferiors. If he died, there was an end of it; if he lived, it was no matter. She felt it deeply, trying not to feel it, and saying it was no business of hers all the time.

"But, good heaven!" cried Mrs. Lascelles; "they ought not to go on in that way. They ought to be hindered. Can't any one interfere?"

The soldier evidently thought that the interference was not to come from him, for he remained quietly looking at the drag, from which proceeded loud laughing and talking, mixed with occasional odd noises.

"Are they not going to send for a doctor?" asked Mrs. Lascelles, who took a great interest in the fallen hero.

"Yes, ma'am; Captain Hardwicke's groom is gone for the surgeon," said the soldier. Then looking forward, as if he saw some one

approaching, he added — “ Here comes our Major: he will see about him.”

“ I am glad some one is coming, I am sure,” said Mrs. Lascelles. “ Isn’t it horrid, my dear Anne? Gracious! how pale you are! Why, you are more frightened than I was! I do hate seeing accidents: they may break their necks, and welcome, when I am away. Bless me, what a fine-looking man!”

A man, dark, imperious-looking, mounted on a splendid horse, dashed up to the carriage-door, reined suddenly back, and asked, in a stern abrupt voice, “ What was the matter?”

“ He has had a bad fall,” said a head, poked out of the window.

“ He is coming round, though, for he is getting very savage!” said another head, coming out in its turn.

A sort of angry scuffling noise was heard within, confirming this statement.

“ What horse did he ride, then?” asked the dark man.

“ The grey : that new purchase of his.”

“ Then it ’s no wonder,” he returned, shortly.

“ The wonder would have been the other way,” was the lucid remark of the first speaker, holding his cigar between his fingers as he spoke.

“ Doctor, he has had an awkward fall,” said the dark man, turning to a stout, good-humoured looking person, who now came on the scene.

“ The doctor dismounted, opened the door of the drag, looked in, and then, setting one foot on the step, he handed, or rather tumbled out the three smokers in succession.

“ Put to, and drive slowly home,” he said to one of the grooms. Then, turning to the dark man, who sat on his horse like a statue during these proceedings, he remarked—

“ He won’t die this time ! ”

Whether this intelligence rejoiced the other or not did not appear ; for he turned his horse, and rode slowly away.

"A very striking looking man," said Mrs. Lascelles; "I wonder who is the Major of this regiment?"

"I think his name is Carden," replied the gentleman with whom she had been flirting. "I met him a short time ago, at the Sydenhams: but that man was not the Major."

"The soldier said he was," said Mrs. Lascelles.

"Was he? oh! very likely. I thought Carden had been an older man; but all those fellows with moustaches are alike."

"Oh! don't say so!" cried Mrs. Lascelles. "You seldom see such a man as that! Were you not struck with him, Anne?"

"No," replied Anne, languidly.

"He is struck with you, then, my dear," said Mrs. Lascelles, laughing; "for here he comes back again."

In fact, he rode slowly past their carriage, and as he passed, he fixed his eyes gravely and earnestly upon Anne; who, not liking

such a decided look, turned her head quietly away.

By this time her horses were put to, and they were moving, to her great relief, off the course.

Anne longed to be at home again, to lie down and rest, and not listen to that interminable chatter which Mrs. Lascelles kept up. She was planning and thinking, too, how she could manage to evade going to the ball in the evening : while Agnes was running on about the accident, and about the dark man, whose appearance seemed to have considerably affected her.

“ I ’m not clear whether he is the Major or not,” she said. “ That does not signify. Mr. Graham ought to know, having met him so lately ; but I do declare he has the most beautiful horse ! I mean to ride on horseback as soon as I get my new habit. Now, that is the sort of man I should like to be seen riding with.”

Now, Anne *had* been struck with his appearance, though she would not allow it. She had been surprised into admiring his abrupt imperative kind of manner, and his perfect horsemanship, and she directly conjectured that he was Lord William Sherwood. She imagined him to be that style of person — and she remembered Lucy saying that he was very partial to young Hardwicke from some unknown cause, and therefore it was likely that he should ride up to inquire about him after his accident. Having settled this in her own mind, forgetting that Lord William was Colonel of the regiment, and that the soldier might be supposed to know his own colonel by sight, she let Agnes go on arguing and conjecturing as much as she pleased.

“Anne, I wonder where my wits have been all this time!” exclaimed Mrs. Lascelles. “Hardwicke!—why, it must be the same Mr. Hardwicke we knew at Parkindale! I thought

I had seen the face before—to be sure ! Oh, I shall certainly send to inquire after him ! I shall renew the acquaintance ! But you see these demure, mighty good young men ! How they turn out ! It is always so ! For *I* suppose *you* even are not green enough not to see what he is ! Those ladies, my dear ! Oh ! it's delightful to think. I dare say he is twice as pleasant now, as he was when he was so very prudent ! If Frank could hear this—poor Frank, how he would laugh. But I will write by this very post, and tell Aunt Morton all about it.”

“Do you know, Agnes, my head is so very bad, I think I must give up the ball,” said Anne, faintly.

“The ball ! Oh ! Anne, if you love me, don't say a word about that ! Go to bed directly you get home, and I'll come in with you and see that you get some strong hot coffee. Only think of poor me, all alone ; people will say it was hardly correct ; and yet

go I would, if Lascelles were here kneeling down and begging me to stay at home. I am only sorry that delightful Captain Hardwicke will not be there too ; but, for goodness sake, here is my salts, and my vinaigrette ; and, Hugh, be quiet, and don't speak one word to cousin all the way home, or I'll whip you."

CHAPTER VI.

Ar. Oh ! Lady, would the past had never been ?

La. Not so ; there is a lesson in the past
That nothing else can teach us—nothing ever
Like the sharp schooling of experience !
I sometimes think it is almost a pity
We cannot live our lives over again,
With all our better knowledge to instruct
The second path—it would not be so thorny,
That 's certain !

ANON.

THERE was one trifling impediment to the scheme of perfect repose which Agnes had kindly planned out for her cousin to enjoy until she wanted her. Little Hugh most strenuously refused to go home, and he had got such a grasp of Anne's skirt that it was not very easy to make him let go. He had a very distinct perception of his friends and

his foes ; and at present he classed his mamma very decidedly among the latter sort.

“ He will not disturb me, indeed, Agnes,” said Anne, as Mrs. Lascelles tried vainly to shake him loose ; “ I had much rather have him.”

“ But, my dear creature, how will you be able to get to sleep, then ? ” asked Agnes, impatiently.

“ I dare say he will sleep too,” said Anne ; “ you may trust me for being ready at eleven.”

Miss Elder was not much surprised that Anne preferred coffee in her room, to dinner, after her fatiguing morning, though she little knew how much right she had to be exhausted.

“ I make you a very bad companion,” said she, as Miss Elder came into her dressing-room to pour out her coffee and see her comfortably settled. “ I wish you would invite the Miss Austins whenever I am out, or

tired ; they would enjoy an evening with you, and my conscience would be more at rest."

"I should enjoy it very much," said Miss Elder ; "and what are we to do with this little fellow ? "

"He shall have a bed made up in my dressing-room," said Anne, taking off his large hat and his velvet basque ; "but he is going to take a nap on the sofa with me when he has had some tea."

As Hugh had been eating during the greater part of the afternoon, he did not want a very hearty meal, and his mother's threat of giving him no supper need not have disturbed him as much as it did. After spilling his tea over into the saucer, and pouring it back, partly on his frock and partly into the cup, and playing with his teaspoon, and wasting his bread and butter, he applied to Anne's coffee, sipped a little from her cup, crumbled her *brioche* all over the carpet, and

then very willingly nestled down on the sofa, with his curly head just under her chin, and fell fast asleep.

Towser, after drawing a wadded coverlet over them both, applied herself to sweeping up the crumbs, arranging the fire, and laying out everything that would be wanted for her lady's toilet. And though an indifferent lady's maid, for she could neither make a cap nor trim a bonnet, she was invaluable in one respect—she never asked questions. The idea of coming up to her mistress when she was half-asleep, and begging to know what she would wear, or when she would want the carriage, never crossed her brain. She supposed that Anne would most likely array herself in her newest purchases, and acted on the idea. What her mistress told her she implicitly followed, and she settled all the rest herself. After hanging Hugh's hat and basque in a closet, blessing the owner as she did so—for she was very fond of children—she stole off,

leaving Anne at rest till it was time to dress. But her mind would not let her rest : she had never felt so humbled, so mortified, as she had done that day. It is one thing to hear a man in society called gay, or naughty, or any of the pretty coaxing terms which ladies apply to dissolute persons, as if they did not know how to pet them enough for their vices ; and it is another thing to be brought face to face with such vices in broad daylight—to see how pitiful and how shocking such habits appear. To see a man talking, and joking with creatures who would not be received as scullions in a decent house—calling them Sophy and Fan, and letting them call him Hardwicke—to see him go through all the absurd varieties of intoxication ; betting and squandering the money that he must give an account for if he had it ; and if he had not, that he must beg of his friends, to acquit his debts. Oh ! how mean, how contemptible, he appeared. And then to think it was her own fault, her own

entire doing, that she was in any way connected with this man—what a poor miserable near-sighted creature she had been. Oh! if she could but live her life over again—how scrupulous, how cautious she would be never to do what was in itself wrong, however circumstances might seem to palliate it, in her own case. There was but one rule of right for every one; had she but adhered to it!

However, at last, the deep soft breathing of the child, and his little warm face resting on her shoulder, seemed to impart a sympathetic calm to her feelings; she thought less, her half-closed eyes rested on the bright fire glowing through the wire-guard; and she slept in her turn, heavily, like a person worn out.

She awoke refreshed and animated; rather pleased than not that she was going to the ball. She was certain not to meet Captain Hardwicke there; and perhaps she should

meet Lord William. She should have no objection to become acquainted with Lucy's brother, he must be worth knowing, from his appearance. That decided manner, — she thought of Lucy's words, — that he had so much character, it would be impossible for any one to lead him wrong; — that was just what she should infer, from his determined bearing. She checked herself — her heart beating, and the colour rushing over her brow; what right had she to indulge in such thoughts? She merely wished (she supposed that was no crime) that Arthur had been such a person; he would then have returned worthy to claim her, and she would perhaps have sent a more conciliatory answer, even to such a letter as he had written.

Miss Elder came in to see her as she stood before the glass, dressed and waiting to be cloaked. Her delicate gray satin dress, trimmed with black rosettes, the wreath of autumn leaves that shaded her glossy dark hair, her

heavy jet ornaments, and the singular whiteness of her neck and arms, formed a most elegant and striking picture. The embroidered handkerchief, the rococo fan, the large crimson bouquet, were lying ready on her toilet table. Young, beautiful, in the fullest sense of that most hackneyed term,—and rich : people little knew what a day of wearing anxiety she had passed, nor how much sorrow and regret lay under that calm exterior.

Wrapping her cloak around her, she kissed her friend, warned her, on pain of her utmost displeasure, not to sit up for her, and hastened down stairs as the vociferous knocker at the street-door proclaimed that Agnes was in waiting below.

Mrs. Lascelles shook off her cloak in the ante-room with an air as if she said, “Do you call that nothing?” and displayed unnumbered skirts of gauze from deepest rose to palest pink, arranged and shaded with true Parisian skill, and an ample allowance of bijou-

terie. She was in a state of perfect ecstasy, and introduced Anne to two of the best men she knew,—single men, who asked Anne to dance, and would not have been a bad match for her. But her affected glances and the half bashful assurance of her manner secured to herself as many partners as she could possibly need; and Anne, taking a seat, prudently, while there was one to be had, composed herself to look on and be amused, as well as she might. There was nothing very much to engage her attention. She had attended some of the grand receptions at Florence and Rome; and without expecting a Brighton ball to compare with some of the most brilliant scenes in Europe, she thought the *coup d'œil* less striking, the women less well dressed, than she had anticipated. The dancing, too, was horrid; the miserable shuffle that now supersedes the graceful Spanish waltz, and the unlucky hop that distinguishes the Polka, offended her good taste; and as she knew

nobody, her conversation was limited to the reply, "I never dance," addressed to such men as had heard of her fortune, and therefore came up to solicit her.

She had perhaps passed an hour in this diverting manner, when she saw a person enter the room whom she at once recognised as Captain Hardwicke. Yes, strange as his taste was in coming to a dance after such a severe fall, there he was, walking rather unsteadily, as if he had not recovered, or perhaps had renewed, his morning potations, and looking extremely handsome, though flushed—handsomer than Anne had been used to think him, with all her partiality, during their first acquaintance. She did earnestly hope that he would not perceive her—she certainly would not have come, had she imagined it possible that he would have been there. Fortunately, Agnes came up to her at the moment, and standing before her with her ice-plate in her hand, formed a very efficient

screen with her flaunting skirts from general observation.

“My dear, have you had any ice? Run, Mr. Sydenham, there is a good soul, and fetch one—a ginger ice, please,—no, not a wafer, a rout-cake or two. Isn't he charming? My dear, he would have danced with you—he said so; but I told him you never danced.”

“Quite right, my dear Agnes.”

“He said that, with one exception, you were the beauty of the room. Of course, he put in that out of civility to me, not because he thought it.”

“I am very well contented, my dear Agnes, with my share of the compliment. Who is your next partner?”

“Charles Harding, for the *deux-temps*; after that, Sir James Everest.”

“Poor little Hugh! I left him fast asleep.”

“I dare say—troublesome child! Oh, yes, Mr. Harding, I am ready. I do wish, dear Anne, you were dancing!”

Agnes was soon jerking herself round in the abominable waltz ; and Anne, to her great dismay, perceived Captain Hardwicke edging himself along the room with tolerable dexterity, considering the state in which he evidently was ! She looked to see whether it was possible to move : there was no other seat vacant in the ball-room, but she was near the entrance of the tea-room ; she would go in at once, cross to the ante-room, and sit there till it was Mrs. Lascelles' pleasure to leave the ball. She rose and moved a few steps, when, to her great annoyance, she found herself directly opposite to Captain Hardwicke, who was staring at her with an expression half-stupid, half-admiring.

“ You are not going, I hope,” he said, in a very insinuating manner. “ I was just about to ask for the pleasure of dancing with you.”

It was plain that he did not know her—perhaps mistook her for some one else ; for

his perceptions were not likely to be clearer than his voice, and he spoke with difficulty.

"Thank you, I never dance," replied Anne, making for the door-way.

"No! — but, stay an instant, I intreat you," he said, very inarticulately. "Where's the master of the ceremonies?—or perhaps you will dispense with an intro—introduction"—the word seemed rather too long for him—"you look as if you would. Allow me—"

He held out his hand so as to intercept her.

She evaded it, and said,—

"You must excuse me this evening. I must beg you not to urge it."

"The idea of your sitting still—it is shocking—the handsomest woman in the room. I can't stand that;" he stammered, steadying himself, as he spoke, with some difficulty against the door-post.

“ I entreat you to let me pass; you must permit me to sit down;” she said, with quivering lips, and an indignant blush, as frightened as angry: for he seized her hand, and attempted to pass his arm round her waist.

“ Are you mad; what are you doing?” said a voice close to them.

Anne looked up, and saw the person she supposed to be Lord William standing before her; not so dark now his hat was off—for his hair was light, like most of the Sherwoods; though his bronzed features and black brows looked dark and threatening enough.

“ Going to take a turn or two in the polka with this lady,” said Captain Hardwicke, still holding her hand fast.

“ I do not dance,” faltered Anne, again trying to release herself

“ Be under no apprehension—you shall not dance,” said the other, gravely. “ Now go home at once. Dr. Bevan sent me in search of you,” he added, turning to Captain Hardwicke.

“ My dear fellow, I am sorry to see—that you—that you are—intoxicated ;” said that gentleman, in a tone of reproach.

His eye shot fire, and he looked as if he would have liked to knock Captain Hardwicke on the head, and settle the question at once. He took him by the arm to separate him from Anne, who could not release her hand from his grasp. But Captain Hardwicke, with the obstinacy common to people who don't see their way very clear, persisted.

“ I have a perfect right to dance with this lady—an undoubted right ;” he said. “ She knows that I,”—

Anne thought that he was about to announce publicly the connexion between them—everything reeled before her eyes—she was not aware that her protector urged him with no gentle hand, back from the door-way, and then turned and caught her sinking figure just before she reached the floor.

CHAPTER VII.

But I woll that thou knowe him now
Ginning and ende, sithin that thou
Art so anguishous and so mate
Disfigurid out of astate :
There maie no wreeche have more of wo,
Ne catife non endurin so.
For if thou knewe him out of dout,
Lightly thou shouldist seapn out
Of thy prison that marrith the.

CHAUCER.

ANNE was indebted to Mrs. Lascelles for a more lucid account of the affair than her own memory could supply. Just the end was sadly confused in her mind,—she did not quite know how much had been said—whether the words she so dreaded had been intercepted by her champion—and how she got down stairs and into the carriage; all which seemed like

a dream, not of yesterday, but a long time back.

“Oh! my dear, we managed that very well; did I tell you I was dancing with Sir James?—we were dancing the polka *à rebours*,—and seeing something of a stir in the doorway, I made him take me across the room; and, oh! goodness, how frightened I was; there was that man—I never will rest till I make him out—standing by; and a lady, evidently a person—a somebody—perhaps his wife (oh, dear! I hope not though), supporting you on the sofa.”

“Lord William is not married,” thought Anne.

“And as soon as you came too, my dear, you walked down to the carriage perfectly well, and this lady insisted on coming with you; the man had been to call our carriage,—he seemed mighty intimate with the lady—he called her Isabel. She looked very aristocratic, and I will tell you exactly how she

was dressed : she was in second mourning, a black tulle robe over black satin ; and the most perfect trimming up the sides of the upper skirt ; I 'll describe it."

While Agnes was crumpling her pocket handkerchief, and placing it at her side to imitate the trimming of the lady's skirt, Anne's thoughts were busy.

It was all clear now. He called the lady Isabel ; that was the name of Captain Hardwicke's sister ; the dark man was, therefore, Colonel Mordaunt, her husband ; his interest in Captain Hardwicke was now accounted for perfectly. She was rather sorry to find he was not Lord William ; but she felt that she ought rather to be glad ; there was now a double reason why she should take no interest in him.

She recollected that Arthur had said in his letter, that the tie that bound them was not to be broken ; her father had certainly entertained a directly opposite opinion. She pic-

tured with horror the question being ever brought to an issue; and two clever, bitter lawyers on either side, discussing and wrangling over every point in the case. Come what might, she would endure almost anything rather than fill the newspapers with her most private, and what had once been her dearest, feelings,—anything, but suffer him to claim her. His apparent admiration of her last night, gave rise to these thoughts; she hoped without reason. She hoped he would adhere to his own declaration.

Agnes had by this time done illustrating the lady's robe, and begun upon Captain Hardwicke. One would think, to hear her, that he had fulfilled some great religious duty in coming to the ball; it was so noble, so spirited, so like a man of condition, after he had so nearly broken his neck in the morning; to make the exertion of coming out, and in uniform, too,—she did love to see a man in uniform. Did Anne observe he had a crape on

his arm? — he certainly was the handsomest man in the world,—she had never admired him so much at Parkindale,—she only wished he had asked her to dance. Topsy? — no, she did not believe he was tipsy,—and oh! she had heard such a dreadful thing had happened to his horse, that lovely grey—it had been obliged to be shot at once, it was so injured by the fall,—she only wondered how Anne would have liked to be thrown headlong over a hurdle—perhaps *she* would have then found it difficult to walk steady, and would not have liked people to say *she* was intoxicated.

The whole picture was so improbable, that Anne could not help laughing; and Mrs. Lascelles having ascertained that she was not going out that day, and having borrowed her carriage for her usual airing on the cliff, flounced herself out of the room.

Anne took up her embroidery and occupied herself with puzzling over the events of the

last few days—the contradictions—the difficulties ;—she had no reason at present to complain of her life being too tame and monotonous. She had not been able to learn from Agnes what Captain Hardwicke had said when he had been so abruptly parted from her—whether he had declared the connexion between them, and whether, if he did, it would not have been considered the fancy of an intoxicated person. She began to wonder whether she was so very handsome after all. The extreme admiration she had excited abroad, had scarcely ever reached her ears ; for she was not the sort of woman to whom a man could bluntly express his ideas of her person ; she was something above that ; and besides she was happily saved from the admiration of very common people, by the high and intellectual stamp of her beauty.

She was very much more beautiful than she had been at fifteen. Every woman of any intelligence gains incomparably in manner,

in gesture, as she grows older ; and she had improved in actual feature and expression. The exquisite outline of her face had sharpened into a more faultless delicacy ; her wonderful eyes looked larger, deeper, altogether more radiant than in those days ; her pure paleness, over which a carmine flush could so easily be summoned, was more interesting than the rosy health which formerly glowed on her cheek.

As she sat now in a peculiar dress—her dress was always a little singular—with hanging sleeves, and a large feather fan slung by a crimson cord from her wrist,—and her fine hair negligently gathered back under a little odd cap, almost a hood of splendid lace, she would have delighted a painter, and we have seen that she rather avoided attempting to delight any one else. It was growing late in the afternoon, and she was still thinking over her work-frame, when a knock at the door, aroused her, and presently Johnson entered

with a card, begging to know if Miss Scawen was at home.

She took the card from the salver, and read the name,

“CAPTAIN A. HARDWICKE.”

Nothing could be more natural, after the occurrence of last night, than that a man in the least degree classing himself as a gentleman, should call to explain his conduct; but she had not expected it, and she trembled from head to foot. But she hastily assented. If he had anything to say, now was a favourable time. Mrs. Lascelles was gone, Miss Elder out on her errands of charity, she might not be alone again, and their meeting, which under any circumstances must be most embarrassing, had better be over when they were likely to be uninterrupted. She nerved herself with all the resolution she possessed, and managed not to start, nor to tremble very much, when the butler announced his name.

It was impossible for any person to be more perfectly graceful than this Captain Hardwicke, when sober. He was very well dressed, and in those days gentlemen attended to their dress when they made a call. She noted in one nervous glance his manner of presenting himself; the way he held his hat, his glacé gloves, the quiet, and rather peculiar air with which he carried his head.

He bowed with an expression of deference that seemed to thank her for admitting him; she returned his bow with some outward composure, her heart fluttering and trembling within.

When he had advanced near enough to speak easily, he began, without the slightest shadow of embarrassment or hesitation,—

“I have a thousand apologies to offer you, Miss Scawen. I hardly know how to express to you my contrition for what occurred last night. I am told that I had the misfortune to occasion you some alarm. It was most

unintentional, I can assure you, but I believe I was not quite—”

A slight smile filled up the blank, as if it was the most natural and gentleman-like thing in the world to be drunk.

All this was so unlike the earnest spirit of his letter, that Anne looked, all blushing as she was, into his face.

He had by this time seated himself in a chair pretty near to her corner of the sofa, his handsome hand resting on the back of another chair, the very attitude she used to notice at Parkindale. She faltered out a few words expressive of her wish to forget the occurrence altogether,—and paused with a beating heart, expecting every moment that he would allude to their unfortunate position.

“The fact was,” he said, “that I had a fall in the morning, and I think that rather—”

He could not well say that the fall made him intoxicated, and a little gesture of the

hat which he held, was all that came to his aid in finishing the sentence.

“I was at the races in the morning,” said Anne, “and I saw the accident. I, indeed we both, were very much alarmed. It looked so frightful at a distance.”

“Oh! you were excessively kind—it was really nothing—at least as far as I was concerned. I only wish my horse had fared no worse. They were obliged to have him shot immediately, which was a horrid bore.”

Every word he uttered, bewildered her more and more. She sat trying to think whether by possibility she could reconcile the contradiction, and also whether she could venture to allude to what weighed so heavy on her mind, that he had said anything which could compromise their secret, to any other person.

His voice roused her from her reverie.

“Are you fond of races?”

“No, I think not, I found it very fatiguing

yesterday. I was so wearied with it all, that I went to the ball quite against my better judgment, and I think that was the reason I was so—so easily overcome,” said Anne, trying to smile.

“I have not the least idea of what took place,” said Captain Hardwicke, with the most polite and candid air in the world, “my brother told me that I had persisted in desiring to waltz with you, a very natural wish, and one that I am sure was shared by every body in the room : (with a glance of very intelligible admiration :) I was horribly shocked ! It is enough to make a man hang himself. I cannot express to you, how much I feel your kindness, in admitting me, and not resenting my importunity. I was extremely distressed to hear that you had left the ball-room in consequence, absolutely indisposed. I do not know how to express to you, my feelings on the subject, for I am afraid that it all happened, so—I rely entirely

on my brother's account, as I cannot trust to my own recollection."

"Now," thought Anne, her whole face whitening; "now is the time to know whether he has trusted any one else with our secret."

"You told your brother," she began.

"He came up, you know; I declare I don't quite remember, but I have some idea of his coming up, and placing himself in my way. He always does get in my way, just when I don't want him." (With a half laugh.)

"That was your brother, then!" exclaimed Anne.

"Yes, my brother Arthur. I fancied he had the pleasure of knowing you, from something he said this morning, but I must have mistaken his meaning, I suppose; he was so excessively annoyed at what passed, that I was quite glad to stop his mouth, by taking it on myself to make my own apologies. He is a very good fellow (in a tone that

seemed to say, not half so good a fellow as I am), but so very steady that one cannot always keep up with his ideas."

He might have gone on much longer without any chance of interruption from Anne.

All was explained, as most strange misunderstandings are explained, by one chance careless word. His brother Arthur! The man she had often declared she could never forget, grown quite out of her knowledge, and his younger brother, looking like what he was, when they parted. It was so very natural, so odd it should never have occurred to her, that this might be the case. Just like every other mystery, when it is cleared up, the wonder is, that it should ever have been a mystery. But, then her letter, so cold, so decisive; a pang of regret shot through her heart, as she recollected the terms in which she had exiled him from her presence. How could she recall what she had written? How explain her mistake? No, it was not

for her to explain. The tone of his letter was so conclusive as to his own feelings, that it was hardly for her to seek a renewal of their acquaintance. No: she felt that no advances must come from her. Wretched as was their present position, it was better than to live under the same roof, with every feeling changed, or averse to each other. These thoughts hurried through her mind with the speed of light almost before Captain Hardwicke had done speaking.

“I think,” she said, “that I was indebted to the kindness of a lady for some assistance, do you happen to know her name? I should wish to express my thanks.”

“Oh! that was my sister, Mrs. Mordaunt; Arthur summoned her I believe: she was too happy, I’m sure. She lives on the Steyne; would be delighted to make your acquaintance, but as to thanks, really—it was the least she could do to endeavour to repair my blunder.”

Captain Hardwicke then rose to take his

leave, renewed his thanks with the most perfect propriety of language for her goodness in admitting him, trusted that he might be permitted to continue an acquaintance so inauspiciously begun, but so delightful; and retreated to the door.

Anne with much more self-possession than she had seen him enter, received his adieux, and replied in general terms to his offers of so respectable and improving an acquaintance.

Then resting her pale forehead on her hands, she sank again into thought, revolving over and over again her singular lot.

She felt in an instant all her affection for Arthur Hardwicke revive; all her fears of his altered disposition dispelled by his brother's explanation. She saw in him the same temper she had so admired at Parkindale; the strange control over others, the self-possession, the reserve, always attractive to superior minds (it is a common understanding that

confounds openness with integrity), the perfect simplicity of manner. Her heart which since the death of her brother had felt so lonely, was filled and engrossed in a moment; and between her and its object, there was a barrier of her own making, which yet she could not regret to have made. The more she loved him, the less would she embitter his life by her presence,—she could bear anything rather than feel herself an unwelcome burden. She would be everything, as she once was, or nothing, to the man she loved. But with regard to the future, she was perfectly helpless. She could imagine no circumstances to arise, that could bring them again into each other's society, and still more, nothing that could awake again in him the sentiments he once had entertained for her. She could imagine that a man of his temper, would entertain the most rigid and fastidious ideas of female propriety, and that he would look back with grave disapprobation to the

wilful independence of her conduct at Parkindale, even though it had been caused by his own persuasion. But she was happier than she had been for years. She was proud that he had ever distinguished her, proud that she had chosen him, proud that she had a secret right to bear his name, she was restored to the luxury of self-respect.

Another thundering knock announced a visitor. It was her own carriage come back; and Agnes flying up stairs, came into the room, all breathless with some delightful news.

“My dear, I’ve found it out! I have found out all about him!” she cried, sinking into an arm-chair, “*I would* come in to tell you; it was at the Sydenhams. By the way, Anne, you are so admired in that quarter, but they were speaking of Captain Hardwicke, and would you believe it, that’s *not* the Parkindale man; I shall come to him presently, he is such a delightful creature,

his name is Alfred, and the other, the one we know, is now Sir Arthur, his eldest brother died,—it was quite a melancholy history, which I'll tell you by and bye, and he returned from India very lately, on his father's death indeed; and somehow got into this regiment, and I must tell you that Major Carden, who was here before, is engaged to Louisa Sydenham, he has sold out, and they are going to live in the Isle of Wight, but I told Louisa they will soon tire of that. And he has been doing I don't know what for his brother,—I don't mean Major Carden that was, I mean Sir Arthur,—for that dear Captain Hardwicke was awfully in debt; but Mrs. Sydenham thinks he has been much steadier since Sir Arthur has been here."

"Steadier!" thought Anne, "I wonder what he was before."

"Well, but, my dear, this will be a nice little acquaintance for us,—these two Hardwicks,—for I shall stop Sir Arthur

on the cliff, the very next time I meet him, and introduce myself, and make him present his brother to me. Do you know they say nobody can help liking Captain Hardwicke; he is so pleasant, and so handsome,—and as for his being wild, that is quite his own affair, I am old enough to take care of myself.”

“He has been here,” said Anne, quietly.

“Here! my dear creature; you don’t say so! Here, while I was out; and if I had met him, there would have been an introduction at once; just like my luck! What did he say for himself?”

“All that he could,—he was very sorry.”

“Sorry! oh! about last night, poor dear man; enough to make him drink, to lose a horse worth two hundred guineas. I think him the most charming man in Brighton! And you may tell him so, when you see him again!”

CHAPTER VIII.

Even in the extreme of misery, noble women still preserve
Over their own selves, the mastery—by their virtues
winning Heaven,—
Of their faithless lords abandoned—anger feel not even
then.

MILMAN:—*from the Sanscrit.*

ANNE seemed to have taken a new lease of youth and health from the day before. She met Miss Elder at breakfast with a glow on her cheek, and a light in her eyes, that reminded her of the old days at King's Cope.

“Brighton is beginning to do you good at last, my dear Anne,” said Miss Elder, as she poured out the tea.

“Brighton? yes;” said Anne, smiling.

It was no longer the same Brighton that she had detested, with its frightful environs, its incomplete architecture, its scanty vegetation, and the busy vulgarity that deprived the very shore of the interest and sublimity that belongs of right to the ocean. To remain a winter in the same place with *him* was a happiness, a source of intense interest that she hardly dared to picture to herself. Her first thought that morning had been, whether she should by possibility see him during the day.

Her chances of this were very small. His habits seldom led him into the throng of visitors that swarmed on the cliff and esplanades; nor was he the sort of person to be found lounging over the reading-table at the library, or flirting with the handsome girl at the *bon-bon* warehouse.

Little Hugh came down to Anne every morning for a lesson in reading; for Agnes frankly announced that she could not teach

him, she was so busy, and he was such a naughty boy.

Anne was very little more successful, but she had a great deal of patience, and a few words were spelt, and sometimes a short verse learned from the Psalms, before he grew restive: and he was so happy with her—he would sit arranging his sugar-plums on the ledge of the window, or loading his little cart with her pin-cushions and netting-silk, draw it gravely round and round the room;—and then he enjoyed so much his ramble on the beach by her side, with his tiny basket for sea-weed, and the spade with which he meant to dig up all sorts of treasures for his cousin: and when he was quite tired and hungry, his greatest delight was to be allowed to ride home in a goat-chaise, and to dine at Anne's luncheon far more comfortably than he could do at home; while Anne minced his chicken and mashed his potatoes, and helped him to tart and

custard much more liberally than his nurse would have done. And then he was put to sleep in her dressing-room, and woke up to come in for half her cup of coffee and a sponge cake, while she was dressing, and was only handed over to Mrs. Clerk to be carried back to Russell Square just before dinner was announced; so that it was no wonder he told everybody that he liked Brighton a great deal better than Datchley.

One morning, in the beginning of November, while Anne was trying with all her might to teach Hugh the first line of the multiplication table, by means of a long array of sugared almonds, Lady Lucy walked into the room looking extremely lovely in her autumn bonnet of lilac silk, and was received by Hugh with a shout, and something like a cry of surprise and pleasure from Anne.

"I came just to tell you that I *am* come," said Lucy, returning her friend's embrace; "I dare say you had given us up."

“Almost,” said Anne; “I called at your house yesterday, and they knew nothing about you.”

“The fact is we went on to another friend near Rochester, to meet Adelaide, who has just returned from Switzerland, and we were persuaded to give them another day, and another; and if it had not been for William, I do not know but we should be in Kent now.”

“Lady Orrington I hope is better.”

“No, much worse, but her faith is not at all shaken in Cosset—these quacks manage to preserve their influence in a wonderful manner—she wishes to have him down to see her, but William and Robert threaten him with all sorts of bodily harm if she does, and you know she takes everything people say quite literally.”

“You are looking so very well, Lucy.”

“So William tells me; he says I am much more personable than when he left

England. I ascribe it all to Datchley: as for you, I understand you are turning all the heads in Brighton ! ”

“ My dear Lucy ! It must be by report then ; I have hardly been seen.—But Miss Elder will be so happy to see you. Run, Hugh, and knock at Miss Elder’s door, and tell her who is come.”

Hugh trotted off, and was presently heard ascending the stairs, with one foot foremost, after the manner of children.

“ As great a darling as ever ! ” said Lucy.

“ Just ; — do not you think him very pretty ? ”

“ I always did ! though I believe you cork those dark eyebrows of his.”

“ Oh ! Lucy ! it is in the family ! ”

“ True ;—who is it I have seen lately with that peculiar brow and light hair ?—I cannot recollect.—My dear Miss Elder, how do you do ? ”

Miss Elder’s appearance diverted Lucy’s

attention from the deep blush which her remark had summoned over Anne's face ; for she thought of Sir Arthur, in whom this peculiarity was very striking, and fancied Lucy might have alluded to him.

“ Does not your ladyship think Miss Scawen looking very well ? ” asked Miss Elder, with a glance of pride at her young friend.

“ Wonderfully ! ” said Lady Lucy. “ Brighton has done for her what Datchley did for me.”

When they had sat chatting for a little while, Lucy asked Anne what she was going to do.

“ After luncheon, I am going to call on Lady Orrington.”

“ Will you put it off till to-morrow ? Mamma will really enjoy seeing you, and she keeps her bed to-day : she suffered so much from her journey yesterday.”

“ I am so sorry ; say everything to Lady Orrington from me ; I will take my chance

of seeing her to-morrow ; then I shall go on the beach, with Hugh."

"Let us go together. Will you let me come too?" asked Lady Lucy, kissing him on the head.

Hugh made a little humming sound of assent, and went on counting his almonds.

"He means to be very civil," said Anne, laughing, and stroking his hair ; "he means to say he will feel himself much honoured."

"Feel myself much honoured," said Hugh, his mouth filled with a large sugar-plum.

The next day was very rough and windy ; Anne took Miss Elder to her destination, somewhere in the Western Road, and proceeded to Kemp Town.

She found Lady Orrington up, but suffering from rheumatism.

"It is a complaint I hate," she said ; "it makes one so helpless. Here am I, keeping poor Lucy on the trot all day, for I am sure to want something at the other

end of the room now I can't fetch it myself."

Anne sympathised properly.

"Bill: do you know him?" said Lady Orrington, turning her head slightly towards the bow-window, where Anne, for the first time, perceived a gentleman standing

Lady Lucy introduced them more formally.

He did not move an inch from the window, bowed slightly, and went on arranging a telescope, which had occupied him when she came into the room. She could not help looking at him with some curiosity, recollecting whom she had mistaken for him; and she was ready to confess that she had not flattered Sir Arthur by the mistake.

The very coldest person that can be imagined, his indifference to those he was thrown among was perfectly genuine, and therefore the more galling:—he was prouder than proud, and would have been almost insolent, but that he was too reserved to express his opinions: as

it was, he did so domineer over the few people he associated with, that it was surprising they ever came near him ; but, as you generally find in such cases, they liked it excessively, and followed his lead with the truest humility. The greater number of people have a remarkable turn for being trampled upon—you cannot please them better.

Sir Arthur Hardwicke was one exception to this rule. Very quiet, and very determined, he was particularly suited to have anything to do with a harsh overbearing temper ; he never yielded, and never opposed. Lord William respected him, and was extremely partial to his society ; he was the only man with whom Lord William might be seen walking arm-in-arm.

Lord William had neither the easy good-nature of Lord Orrington nor the quick talents of Lord Robert, but he concealed a good deal of sensibility under his cold exterior, and was quite as fond of his sister as she was of him.

He now stood drearily screwing and shifting the telescope, and occasionally talking in a whisper to himself;—an insane habit which he had possibly acquired by living very much alone.

At last he said coldly to his sister:—

“You can see the East Indiaman now, if you have a mind:” and moved away to the table; where, taking up a paper, he stood reading with the same dreary expression of countenance.

“Will you come? are you fond of shipping?” said Lady Lucy, turning to Anne.

She followed Lucy to the window; for it would not do to confess what was the fact, that even now the sight of a ship turned her sick at heart.

“I can see nothing, William,” said Lucy.

He came up with the paper in his hand, altered the glass, and stood silently by.

“It is right, now. What a beautiful vessel! they are doing something to the sails.”

"Tacking," said Lord William.

"Will you look?" asked Lucy.

"No. I can see it well enough, thank you," said Anne.

Lord William looked at his watch, and put down the paper.

"Are you going, William?"

"Yes. Can I do anything for you?"

"Nothing; but the Duke of Dalmaine was to call for you this morning."

"The Duke is after his time," said Lord William, coldly; "I shall not wait for him."

"He never keeps his appointments," said Lucy.

"*I do*," replied Lord William, walking off.

"And what are we to say when he comes?" asked Lady Orrington.

"Send him after me," said Lord William, as he left the room.

"What on earth, my dear Lucy, can take them to Shoreham?" said Lady Orrington.

"I do not know, mamma; something about horses, I suppose."

"I thought, perhaps, about boats," said Lady Orrington.

"Oh! true. I believe my cousin Dalmayne wants a yacht built."

"My dear Anne, will you take compassion on us two poor women, and dine with us,—that is, with Lucy, for I have dined—the poor girl will be alone else."

"With the greatest pleasure. If you will allow me I will send for my maid."

"No; don't dress—go and walk with Lucy on the pier till dusk. Bill dines at the mess, and Bob is in town."

"But we can chat just as well round the fire," said Anne, "and then we need not leave your ladyship alone."

"No, Lucy wants air, and so do you,—make haste off, and tell them, my dear Lucy, what to say to Dalmayne; don't let them show him up, for rather than not have any

one else to bore, he will bore me. Give me the book Bill was reading. I suppose it is worth something by his taking it up. Good bye, my dears."

"I know, Anne," said Lucy, as they walked on with her servant behind them, "I know you would rather have a quiet evening with me, than go out with Mrs. Lascelles, or I should apologize for mamma's invitation."

"I had indeed. I never go out."

"And your attempt the other day will rather discourage you," said Lucy, smiling.

"Why, how did you hear that, Lucy?"

"From a friend of mine, to whom I will introduce you one day. You may suppose there is no end to the conjectures about it."

"Why, what can people say?" she asked, eagerly.

"Everything. Some thought you had met an old admirer, and the sight overcame you; some, that you were jealous of somebody (I know not who) paying attention to another

somebody; some fancied that there was a quarrel between two men about dancing with you."

"And the fact was, that I was frightened by a tipsy man; and fainted because I am far from strong; but it was the most disagreeable thing. I will never go to a ball again."

"The gentleman was that good-for-nothing Captain Hardwicke," said Lucy.

Anne assented.

"What can make William tolerate him, I am at a loss to imagine," said Lucy; "he is certainly very well-mannered, and of an ancient family; but his character is so very indifferent, and William has no patience with any irregularity."

"His brother is different, I believe," said Anne, almost inaudibly.

"Oh! yes, William has a great regard for him, though he has known him but a short time, We see a great deal of Sir Arthur. And the

Mordaunts are at Brighton. Colonel Mordaunt is always with Captain Hardwicke, making him worse."

"Mrs. Mordaunt is unhappily married, then?"

"I should think she was; but Isabel would rather die than complain."

"That was the lady who so kindly gave me her assistance the other night."

"You know her then. I was hoping to get up a little dramatic scene, when we met her, as we shall do, I dare say, on the pier-head. She walks about a great deal by herself, and dresses oddly. In fact, she gives me the idea of a woman too wretched to care how she looks."

"How fine the sea looks to-day."

"Yes, and they prophecy it will be rougher to-morrow; there is Mrs. Mordaunt, I guessed as much, just as the light begins to fade, and the spray flashes over the pier. Isabel!"

A lady wrapped in a gray cloak, tall, exqui-

sitely fair, with light ringlets all disordered, and trailing over the edge of her bonnet, just as the wind had blown them, turned at the name, and greeted Lady Lucy.

“What on earth brings you out in the wind, you snow-drop? Come and walk with me, I am chilled standing.”

“Let me first introduce you to my friend, Miss Scawen,” said Lucy.

Mrs. Mordaunt looked hard at Anne, and then stretched out her hand,—

“It is not our first meeting,” said she. “I hope you are quite recovered.”

Anne had left her card on Mrs. Mordaunt, which courtesy she had returned, and there the matter had rested. She took the opportunity now, of thanking her for her kindness, which she disclaimed *selon les règles*.

“Lucy,” said Mrs. Mordaunt, “I heard from Harriet to-day; she wants me to find her a nursemaid. Lord help her! what have I to do with nurses? tell her, will you,

when you write, I know nothing of the breed? How is Lady Orrington?"

"Very indifferent. I want to persuade you to dine with Anne and me, we are very dull."

"With all my heart; I'll make another *Ennuyons nous bien*, as Louis XIII. said;—I will join you. Where are all your brothers?"

While Lucy gave an account of her brothers, Anne examined Isabel Mordaunt. Her features were extremely delicate, her eyes long, blue, and dreamy, and the slightness of her make, her long throat, and slender hands and feet, stamped her of the old Norman race.

"Do you hate Brighton, Miss Scawen?" she said, turning to Anne.

"I cannot say I am charmed with it; you live in a lantern, always seeing and being seen. To people used to the retirement of a country life, it is very disagreeable."

"I am glad to hear it; I look down upon every one who likes Brighton. Lucy, I passed

that over-dressed puppy, the Duke of Dalmayne, just now,—I beg your pardon, your cousin.”

“He is here for a few days only; you will not have to pass him very often,” said Lucy, laughing.

“That is a mercy! Is Arthur with Lord William to-day!”

“I should not wonder; he might have appointed to call for Sir Arthur. He makes Dalmayne wait on him.”

“Right!” said Mrs. Mordaunt. “Lord William can never see a worm without setting his foot on it.—A good habit.”

“Poor little Duke!” said Anne.

“Do you know him?”

“A little.”

“The less the better.”

“What has he done to offend you?” asked Lady Lucy.

Mrs. Mordaunt looked hard at Lucy, laughed slightly, and made no reply.

He had done nothing to *her*, but he was doing his best to get rid of a princely fortune, and Colonel Mordaunt warmly seconded him in the effort. He won his money, and showed him how to raise more. Mrs. Mordaunt then disliked the Duke as if she had injured him: though she had no voice in the matter.

It was time to go in. Isabel went up to Lady Orrington, and kissed her.

"You are not better," she said, "because you have not followed my prescription; I am not going to pity a bad Marchioness who will not take advice."

"My dear, it was kill or cure, your advice."

"No, not at all, you have not the spirit of a fly."

"Lucy, what am I to do with all this hair?" she asked, pushing back the damp clusters from her face.

"Sophie shall put it up for you."

"Thanks! I shall look a fright, but that does not matter, between ourselves."

"You and I are independent of Sophie," said Lucy, as they laid aside their bonnets in her dressing-room; "you cannot think, Isabel, what a wilderness of curls this thing has braided away."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Mordaunt, looking at Anne with a soft expression.

She said no word more; but Anne felt, though each knew nothing of the other's career, that there was between them the sympathy of suffering.

Anne wore a black velvet robe *montante*, with a point lace frill down the front. Mrs. Mordaunt, a close, black cachemire, almost like a nun. Lucy, a *raisin de Corinthe* silk, with "hundreds of flounces," as her cousin, the Duke would have said.

As they stood talking round the drawing-room fire waiting for dinner, you could hardly find three more different or more striking women.

“ Little Dalmayne came, five minutes after you left the house, my dears,” said Lady Orrington.

“ Did you send him about his business ? ” asked Lucy.

“ Yes ! at least Hurst did ; but he will hardly overtake William.”

“ Lord William will not much bewail his loss,” said Mrs. Mordaunt.

“ No. Bill cannot endure his cousin,” said Lady Orrington.

“ I do think William is a little harsh to him, mamma,” said Lady Lucy.

“ Not a bit more than he deserves,” said Lady Orrington : “ a vulgar, wicked boy ! He will come to no good, I ’m sure.”

“ One feels a right to abuse our own relations,” said Lady Lucy. “ Anne, have not you a word to throw at him ! He is a connexion of yours now ? ”

“ I am inclined to stand up for him, out of perverseness,” said Anne.

"You should hear Bill and Mote talk him over," said Lady Orrington.

"What do they say?" asked Mrs. Mordaunt.

"Mote, you know, was his guardian," said Lady Orrington; "and all the good that ever was done him, I can safely say was done by me. Mote never could deny him anything, he gave him money whenever he asked for it, and when even *he* had not the face to ask for more, the little wretch went to the Jews. Of course, when he came of age, he kept up so good a habit; and though Mote had washed his hands of him, he could not help feeling uneasy at his ways."

"I wish," he said to Bill, "I wish you would take little Dalmayne in hand, he is ruining himself."

"Let him," said Bill, "what is he good for?"

"He is our cousin, you know," said Mote.

“ ‘He is a low fellow,’ said Bill, ‘look at his hands.’ You know, Lucy, Bill thinks so much of hands, and is very well contented with his own.”

“I don’t deny it,” said Lucy.

“And with very good reason,” said Mrs. Mordaunt.

“Mote hinted that he had not made them himself, but Bill declared, and this is the secret of his aversion, that Dalmayne took after his grandmother, the banker’s daughter, in everything. ‘If people chose,’ he said, ‘*mettre du fumier sur leurs terres*, by a dirty city connexion, they must take the consequences.’”

“ ‘The consequence, Mote told him, is, that he is a rich duke, instead of a poor one.’ ”

“ ‘He won’t be rich long, take my word for it,’ said Bill.”

“ ‘And what’s to be done?’ said Mote, at his wits’ end.”

“ ‘Blow his brains out, if you want to do

him a good turn,' said Bill;—and he never would give him any other advice."

Mrs. Mordaunt laughed scornfully, and warmly applauded Lord William's counsel. Anne sided with Lord Orrington.

"You must not take all this literally," said Lucy, in a low voice to Anne. "William was irritated by Dalmayne's folly. He would serve him if he could. But what I cannot understand," she said, lowering her voice still more, "he will excuse and defend in Captain Hardwicke, the very things that make him so angry in Dalmayne."

"I suppose," said Anne, smiling faintly, "that all men are a little inconsistent."

The bell rang at this moment.

"Oh! Lucy, you traitress! You have played me false!" cried Mrs. Mordaunt

"No, indeed! I believed we were alone," said Lucy; "and it can only be your brother and mine."

"Only!" said Mrs. Mordaunt.

Only! thought Anne. Her first meeting with Sir Arthur.

“Besides, you could not look better,” said Lucy.

Mrs. Mordaunt made a court courtesy.

Anne sat down trembling on the nearest chair.

Lucy was right.

CHAPTER IX.

Ar. It is a lover's hell
To doubt—and yet I falter—fear—Oh ! love,
In all its ecstacy, is mixed with dread—
Is troubled ever—there 's so much to lose
That the heart broods upon its airy treasure
As fearful as a miser o'er his gold,
Lest some small diminution of the hoard
Should make him seem undone !

ANON.

“ WILL you take us in, madam ? ” said Lord William, going up to his mother.

“ To be sure. Sir Arthur, I am glad to see you. Here are some young ladies who were going to pass a very dull evening : you must do what you can to amuse them.”

Sir Arthur naturally looked at the young ladies, nodded to his sister, came forward to shake hands with Lucy, and seeing Anne,

paused a moment, as if uncertain whether to address her.

Lady Orrington then introduced them, and they exchanged bows. Something like a smile passed over his face : for certainly it was odd to be introduced to Anne ; but Lucy spoke to him, and he crossed to her side of the fire.

“ I should not wonder if Dalmayne were to come in,” said Lord William.

“ I should wonder at nothing, since you are here,” said Lucy. “ William so seldom changes his mind,” she added, turning to Sir Arthur.

“ Very seldom,” he replied, with a smile.

“ My dear, I have dined,” said Lady Orrington, when dinner was announced. “ William, take care of Mrs. Mordaunt. Oh ! wait a moment ; here is little Dalmayne.”

Lord William had given his arm to Mrs. Mordaunt ; Sir Arthur had taken Lady Lucy, to Anne's great relief, when the Duke was

heard running up the stairs; they all made a pause.

“Aunt Orrington, will you ask me to dinner?” said the Duke, shyly.

“Certainly; we are not worse than Arabs,” she replied.

“Always after your time,” said Lord William; “take Mrs. Mordaunt, and don’t stand making speeches—dinner is waiting.”

Then transferring Mrs. Mordaunt to the Duke, and offering his arm to Anne, he led her down stairs.

Anne thought that he seemed very willing to get rid of his companion, and Mrs. Mordaunt coloured, either perceiving it, or because she disliked the Duke of Dalmaine.

“Oh! Miss Scawen, I am so glad to see you!” said the Duke, looking back as he led Mrs. Mordaunt down the narrow staircase; “only think of meeting you at Brighton. I presume I am not mistaken, in still addressing you as Miss Scawen!”

Anne informed him that he was right, and he went on talking without intermission, placing Mrs. Mordaunt beside her brother at the dinner table, and going round to sit by Anne.

“Duke, Mrs. Mordaunt should —” Lord William began.

“I know,” interrupted the Duke; “I have such thousands of things to say to Miss Scawen (taking his seat); it is so delightful to meet an old friend. How is old Morton; he was my tutor at Oxford; I hear you have presented him to the living at Datchley.”

“I left old Mr. Morton very well, and very busy,” said Anne, smiling; for *old* Morton was just twenty-seven.

“You could not have made a better choice, I’m sure,” said the Duke. “It is what I would have done myself, if I had a living to present; but I’ve sold them all.”

Lord William seldom spoke; but a sentiment was very apt to become quite legible on his face.

"Idiot!" was the word that seemed to hover round his mouth.

"I suppose he is hard at it, trying to convert all the people, and seeing after the bibles and blankets," said the Duke.

"Heathen!" was now the word Lord William seemed about to utter.

"He is very active in his parish, as you may imagine," said Anne.

"I say, Miss Scawen, how is the old woman who broke her leg running after me when I threw brickbats at her beehives?"

"Brute!" thought Lord William.

"She is quite well, and often speaks of your Grace; I believe she thought you paid for her shoulder,—for I beg to remind you it was her shoulder she put out,—rather more than she was worth altogether."

"She's right there; old women are fit only for firewood," said the Duke. "So you would not wait for me, cousin William!"

"I should think not!" said Lord William,

so distinctly, as to give full value to the remark.

“I don’t care—I won’t go to Shoreham; I’ll buy a yacht, ready made, at Southampton: they have thousands there. Mrs. Mordaunt, you were actually on the pier in all the rain yesterday,” said the Duke.

“Why, where did you see me?” asked Mrs. Mordaunt.

“My cousin William saw you; we were riding up the cliff together.”

She turned quite pale. Lord William gave one quick flashing glance at her, and then looked vacantly forward;—a common habit of his when he was observing everything.

“Good heaven! what eyes you have!” said Mrs. Mordaunt, laughing off her emotion.

“You see everything!”

“I have seen a good many things in my time,” he replied, in his usual frigid manner.

Sir Arthur was talking to Lucy, and ap-

peared too much engrossed to notice the other guests.

“We are going on board the frigate to-morrow,” said Lord William to his sister.

There was a frigate commanded by a relation of the Sherwoods, lying at anchor two or three miles from Brighton.

“*Qui nous ?*” asked the Duke, who could never be silent long.

“Sir Arthur and myself,” he replied.

“Not, I hope, if the sea continues so rough,” said Lucy, looking imploringly at her brother.

“We are going to the frigate to-morrow,” he repeated.

He was in one of his obstinate fits, if he could ever be said to be out of them. Lucy did not press the subject.

There was a short silence, which was broken by the Duke saying, in a lively tone,—

“I know Welsh !”

“Speak it then,” said Lord William.

“ Why ? ”

“ Because we shall none of us know what you are saying,” replied his cousin.

“ Do you know the Welsh for Chicken Hazard ? ” asked Anne.

“ Or Barberina ? ” said Lucy.

(The name of a race-horse he had bought for an enormous sum, which proved unable not only to run, but also to walk.)

“ Or *Potage à la Reine* ? ” added Mrs. Mor-daunt.

“ Not for those things ; but I know a great deal ; ” said the Duke, colouring, yet pleased ; for a man would always rather women should attack him, than pass him over.

The ladies left the dining-room, and found Lady Orrington poring over her book by the fire-light.

“ Mamma ! ” exclaimed Lady Lucy, ringing for candles ; “ you are not fit to be left one minute ! ”

“ Never give *me* any advice,” said Isabel,

"I shall laugh at it; you cannot manage yourself."

"Your ladyship must have found a very engrossing book," said Anne, obeying Lady Orrington's sign to take a seat beside her.

"A very exciting book, my dear; 'The Lays of Ancient Rome.' I am an old woman, but I really feel quite young and hot-headed while I read them. Odd enough though, that Bill should have got such a work."

"Sir Arthur lent it to *me*," said Lucy.

"What were you talking about at dinner?" asked Mrs. Mordaunt.

"All sorts of things; yachts, frigates, horses; and Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra."

"What in heaven's name brought *her* up?"

"The Arab Sir Arthur rides is called Zenobia."

"Can she walk up stairs?"

"So her master affirms."

"I have rather neglected Zenobia; I had

not made myself acquainted with her attributes."

"Sir Arthur tells me he brought her from Ahmedabad."

"A desperate hunter Arthur was, in a country where hunting was worth following," said Mrs. Mordaunt.

"So was William at the Cape. They often compare notes," said Lucy.

"I have no work," said Mrs. Mordaunt. "I do not like to sit with my hands before me."

"Help me with this never-ending table-cover," said Lady Lucy.

"Give me a corner," said Anne.

"I wish I had never begun it," said Lucy. "I had no idea of the number of stitches."

"We will all help you, if you are good," said Isabel; "but you must give me a larger needle."

"There is one: Anne, don't let Isabel drive you quite off the sofa."

"Shall we be Anne and Isabel?" said Mrs. Mordaunt, with her soft look, like a caress.

"With all my heart, said Anne.

"Sit round—Lucy come on this side. How notable we are!" said Mrs. Mordaunt.

"It is so *moyen âge* to work in a cluster on a great piece of embroidery," said Anne.

"Fancy it an altar-cloth," said Lucy.

"Here is coffee; how glad I am," said Mrs. Mordaunt. "This horrid air parches me; and the men coming—they have not sat long. Arthur, come and look at this broderie."

"Is it your work, Lady Lucy?" he asked, taking up the edge.

"But my pattern, Sir Arthur," said Lady Orrington; "I drew it from an old cornice at Sherwood."

"Lucy, you should work me a pair of colours," said Lord William, standing behind her with his coffee-cup in his hand.

"So I would, my dear William, if I had

the faintest idea how to begin; but I know no more of a pair of colours than I do of a conic section. Do you, Anne?"

"Not in the least," said Anne.

"A square sort of handkerchief that hangs to a trumpet," said Mrs. Mordaunt.

"Not exactly," said Sir Arthur.

"I wish people that don't help would not hinder," said Mrs. Mordaunt; "somebody is in my light."

Somebody was Lord William: he was leaning on the back of her chair.

"It is very easy to do, that is clear," said the Duke.

"I wish you would try," said Lucy.

"I could,—I have done thousands of things of that kind," said the Duke; "only Cousin William would laugh at me."

"Perhaps, at your leisure, you will leave off calling me 'Cousin William,'" said his relative, with a look of disgust.

"Is not he cross, Aunt Orrington?" said

the Duke, taking a seat beside the Marchioness.

"A confounded plebeian!" said Lord William to his sister.

"But you *are* very cross to him," said Lucy.

"Give me some music," he said, gently, as he always spoke to her.

"If you like it. Anne, will you sing with me?"

Sir Arthur opened the piano for Lucy, and took up a portfolio.

"Not that," said Lady Lucy; "the thin book underneath—your book, William calls it."

Anne felt bewildered. She had not pictured to herself Sir Arthur intimate with any one else. Divided from her she knew he was, but that is more easily borne by some persons than the other. People are *en scène*, however, half their lives; and with her heart aching almost insupportably, her wondrous voice

floated serenely around. Lucy was in voice also, and they did full justice to Mozart's delicate music.

The Duke, who had been talking incessantly to Lady Orrington the whole time, was loud in his praises.

Lord William, who had been leaning back in an arm-chair with his eyes shut, possibly enjoyed it also.

Anne returned at once to her place beside Lady Orrington. Lucy drew a chair close to her brother. Sir Arthur was standing before the piano, turning over the music.

"William, you hear the wind?" she said, in an anxious voice.

"Perfectly," he replied, looking at her with a very good-natured expression.

"And yet you will go in an open boat to that frigate, three miles off," she said.

He took her hand, as if to examine the rings she wore, pressed it kindly, held it for a minute, and then rising from his chair,

crossed over to the chimney-piece. As for changing, or even discussing, his intensions, that was not to be expected of him for a moment.

“And you, too, Sir Arthur?” said Lucy.

He turned from the music-stand, and coming up to her, took the chair Lord William had left.

“Well, Lady Lucy,” he said, with a gesture, as if placing himself completely at her service.

“Oh! you heard what I said to William; this is a bad coast—you cannot deny that—and a gale of wind has set in, and yet you persuaded William to go over that ship.

“No; permit me, Lady Lucy. I am perfectly guiltless in this affair. Captain Tennyson arranged it all with Lord William yesterday, and I found myself included in the scheme before I knew it had been set on foot.”

“You might persuade him to put it off,

if the sea should be very rough to-morrow."

"Do you really think so, Lady Lucy?" he asked, with a meaning smile.

"You might, if anybody could."

"You have anticipated me; I was just about to say the same thing to your ladyship."

"I think I should be more at ease if you would try!"

"I will tell you what he would say; he would insist on going by himself; and, besides, one would not like to give in; the sailors would laugh at us."

"I do not think either of you care much for 'the world's dread laugh,'" said Lucy.

"There is no danger, really, Lady Lucy," said Sir Arthur, starting up. "There is a little ballad by Mendelssohn, you sang the other evening; will you have the kindness to sing it again?"

"You want to get rid of the subject," said Lucy, seating herself at the piano.

“ It is not in that book ; I have looked through it,” said Sir Arthur.

“ Something I knew by heart then ; this, perhaps,” said Lady Lucy, beginning to play a few bars.

Lord William was standing before the sofa talking to Anne and Lady Orrington, the Duke chatting with Mrs. Mordaunt.

Sir Arthur and Lady Lucy were puzzling over the air he wished to hear. She began several times, which proved wrong, and he tried to play it with one hand. She caught the air, drew her seat forward, and began.

All this gave them the appearance of great intimacy ; and his friendly manners both to her and to her mother—the book he lent her, and his conversing with her alone, gave Anne the idea of an attachment between them. She thought that Lucy would be just the kind of faultless woman that Sir Arthur would choose, if he could. No forwardness, no levity could ever be brought against her conduct or manners

—her sweet temper, her intelligence, her accomplishment made her only too good for any man — but Sir Arthur would naturally think that a fault on the right side.

Mrs. Mordaunt seemed struck with a similar idea; for leaning across to Anne, she whispered,—

“Look at Arthur and Lucy; is not that rather suspicious?”

“Isabel will not sing,” said Lucy, coming up to the fire, when she had finished her ballad.

“I: no; I have not sung since—oh! since I married, I believe.”

“How long is that?” said Lucy.

“I am out of my apprenticeship!” she replied, quickly and bitterly.

“Good gracious! Seven years? Why, Anne, how long is it since you were with us at Sherwood, you know—in the days of Mr. Clavering?”

“Who is this Mr. Clavering, from whose reign you date?” asked Isabel.

“ It was no *reign*, was it Anne ? ” said Lucy, laughing.

“ No reign, indeed ; ” said Anne, with her calm, serious expression. “ And time must have gone smoothly with you, Lucy, if you have not marked its flight.”

“ You and I,” said Isabel, in a low voice to Anne, “ have known what it is to rough it a little.”

Anne saw Sir Arthur looking fixedly at her ; she felt embarrassed, and for want of something else to do, began arranging the clasp of her bracelet. It was the one Hugh had given her, which she wore habitually. All at once it rushed into her mind the evening she had worn that bracelet, when she had sat on the stairs with Mr. Hardwicke, and given him the golden heart to wear until they met again.

She felt the colour fly into her face, and keeping back her tears by a strong effort, she rose, complained of the heat of

the fire, and moved up the room. Lord William, who had been very civil to her during the evening, followed her, offered her a chair, placed a skreen before her, abused the heat, and stood watching her work, as she resumed her place at the tablecloth.

“ Ah! you have one of those new bracelets I see,” said Mrs. Mordaunt, as Anne reached across to the basket of silks.

“ Mine is not new,” said Anne.

“ Not? Then Silvani is a knave; he boasts them as a novelty; it 's very pretty; don't you think so, Lucy?”

“ Very,” said Lucy. “ I have often admired it; but yours wants the heart; have you lost it Anne?”

“ Yes,” said Anne, working very fast, and not daring to look up.

“ I would have another made, if I were you,” said Mrs. Mordaunt; “ it would be more complete.”

"You cannot replace those things," said Anne, in a very low voice.

"Oh, yes," said Lucy; "you could have one made by any jeweller; it is well worth the expense."

"I meant," said Anne, hurriedly, "that as this bracelet was given me by the brother I have lost, anything new would injure the feeling with which I wear it; he gave me this," she added, clasping her slender fingers round it with energy, "and I would add nothing to it that he had not given."

"Certainly," said Lord William, in a tone of the deepest approval.

Lucy pressed her hand.

"Can I have the pleasure of taking you home?" asked Anne, as her carriage was announced.

"If you will be so very kind," said Mrs. Mordaunt. "I shall take you out of your way; but I won't apologise," she added, with her soft smile, "because you know we are to be friends."

Lord William led Anne down stairs ; the Duke was shawling Mrs. Mordaunt in the hall. Sir Arthur took Anne's cloak from Lord William—who stepped forward to look for the carriage,—and as he put it on, he said in a cold calm manner,—

“ You remind me that I have something to restore to you. Allow me to wait on you to-morrow morning.”

CHAPTER X.

La. I recollect, Lord Arden, once I begged you
To keep a jewel,—not throw one away—
You taught yourself that.

True, it was
But an exchange at first. This rosary,
Three years ago you hung it round my neck—
I recollect that. Oh ! the wing of time,
'Tis fledged with arrows. Take it—take it back !—

ANON.

THE morning rose dark and stormy. Anne told Miss Elder that she expected a gentleman on business, and that she desired to receive him alone. Miss Elder smiled archly ; and she hastened to assure her friend that the business was a disagreeable one, and that she fervently wished the interview at an end.

Indeed, she looked as if she had not slept

during the night, and as if she had a task before her that required all her resolution.

She had, after a night of struggle and distress, come to one determination. She felt quite convinced that Sir Arthur and Lady Lucy were attached to each other, and she resolved to propose to him that their marriage should be at once dissolved. It was a source of disquiet and suspense to herself, and it stood in the way of two people's happiness; one of whom at least was very dear to her.

She felt it the most nervous moment of her life, when Sir Arthur entered; she was far too much agitated herself, to remark that he was no less so; she thought him wonderfully cool, and perhaps he thought the same of her, for distress and doubt had calmed her long ago, and she was not discomposed outwardly, when she rose to receive him.

She resumed her seat, but Sir Arthur remained standing, and stretching towards her

the heart and chain she so well remembered, said,—

“I restore you this locket, with which you entrusted me eight years ago. I could not be content to transmit it through a third person; it must be at your bidding I resign it, for it was to be returned to you only in case of my death, or another contingency, which has never occurred.”

“Eight years,” she whispered, taking the locket from his hand.

“And I also have something to restore,” she said, taking the velvet bag from her neck.

She found some difficulty in getting it open; and as people sometimes grow excited when their calmness is entirely artificial, upon very slight grounds, she was in a fever at not being able to undo the bag.

Her colour rose—her eyes flashed—she rose, and looked round the room for something to cut the seams with.

"What is it?" asked Sir Arthur following her.

"That ring, ah! you do not remember," she said, turning over the objects in a bronze vase, and taking out a penknife. Then, hastily cutting the stitches, she took out the two rings, and held them towards him, on the palm of her hand.

"I can understand your rejecting this," he said gravely, as he took up the turquoise, "but the other, it is yours; all that I can do to respect your feelings, be assured I will do, but I cannot cancel what is past, and therefore it is better that this should remain in your possession; the only fetter, I trust, that your marriage shall ever entail upon you."

"It is on that subject," said Anne, sinking down on the sofa, "that I desire to speak to you."

He stood listening, resting his arm on the mantel-piece, and looking down full upon her.

“I must beg you to recollect,” she said, “that no living person is acquainted with our secret, and that I am therefore obliged to enter into a question that would be more gracefully discussed by any other person.” Sir Arthur bowed his head in assent.

“But some time before my father’s death, I confessed my error to him, and I have the lasting satisfaction to know that he pardoned it; and it was his opinion, in case anything should render it desirable, that the marriage could be dissolved. You seemed to entertain a different view, in your letter.”

“I had no grounds for what I asserted, farther than that I thought it impossible you would ever desire to refer the affair to a public tribunal,” replied Sir Arthur.

“You were quite right, as far as my feelings were concerned,” said Anne; “I have so shrunk from anything like publicity, that I caught at your proposition with more eagerness than I can describe. I never

anticipated any contingency that might alter my views, which were very foolish, and showed I knew little of the world."

His grave regard was full upon her, but he did not quite comprehend what she meant, and he remained silent.

"I forgot," she continued, "that in ceasing to regard me (as was most natural after so many years—pray believe that I mean no shadow of reproach), it was possible that some other person should occupy your heart. In securing my own repose, I forgot what was due to you. I forgot that you could form no fresh ties until those were severed. The publicity I dreaded is chiefly ideal. I live so completely retired that I should hardly know that I had become the topic of a few days, carelessly discussed, and then completely forgotten. Act at once then,—I have known too little happiness myself, to stand in the way of another's. Only let it be done quickly. I can ill bear," she added, with a sad smile, as she parodied

the words of his letter, “ ‘I can ill bear suspense.’ ”

Now it will hardly be credited that Sir Arthur could be so excessively stupid as to suppose that Anne desired for herself the emancipation that she persisted in offering to him ; but it seemed so, for starting impatiently from the mantel-piece, he said, abruptly,—

“ You desire to cancel the marriage ? ”

“ Do not you ? ” asked Anne, surprised.

“ I wish it had never taken place,” he replied.

“ So do I,” said Anne, shrinking together at the declaration ; “ but as it is done, we ought to be thankful that it can be undone.”

“ True,” he said, and began to walk rapidly up and down the room.

“ Well, *now*,” said Anne to herself, “ I wish he would go.”

“ I suppose Lord William is the happy man ! ” he exclaimed, passionately, stopping short in his walk.

Her eyes flashed fire at this insult, for so she considered it.

“Have you any reason to suppose, sir, that I have no shame, and no sense of decorum left?” she said, rising indignantly. “Can any single moment of my life since that unhappy day when we parted at the churchyard-gate, give you the right to impute to me such a disorderly motive? Can you suppose any woman who had not quite abandoned all decency, looking forward to anything but a life of strict seclusion after the exposure which I now anticipate? That I have some few friends who will not desert me, even when they learn what I have done, is owing in some measure to the character I have maintained, and of which you judge so lightly. Is it for you to retort upon me for an action committed when I was so young, and for which I have felt remorse enough, without such a reproach! Lord William, I believe, is a respectable man, and as he deserves, so I trust he may find, a wife

who can look back upon her early life without a blush."

"Why then I—it is a wretched mistake on my part," said Sir Arthur, looking completely bewildered; "can you pardon me? I know not how to assure you of my regret; but believe me there is not a person in the world for whom I have so profound a respect. It is the severest reproach you could address to me, to suppose me wanting in consideration to yourself,—I am not so."

He grew paler and paler, and in his agitation could not find words to express his meaning.

"Then let us part as friends," said Anne, holding out her hand with dignity, though almost breathless with the tumult of her feelings. "We are older and wiser than we were, Sir Arthur; we should not quarrel."

"All I can do, all the atonement I can offer, is to leave you entirely free," said Sir Arthur, clasping Anne's hand; "trust my honour

for the future, and for the past, if you can, forgive me."

Then dropping her hand, he hurried from the room, and rushed down the stairs just as Mrs. Lascelles' footman was ascending them, carrying little Hugh like a parcel, which he was to deliver into Miss Scawen's own hands.

"If you please, Ma'am," said the servant, "Mrs. Lascelles hopes you will be so kind as to take Master Hugh for a few hours, because he is so very naughty that neither she nor Mrs. Clerk could do anything with him."

"Little Hugh! little Hugh!" exclaimed Anne, pressing him in her arms, and covering his head with kisses, as the servant closed the door after him; "he loves me at any rate."

"Yes, cousin, I love you," said Hugh, who had perhaps expected a little lecture instead of a caress; and who returned Anne's embrace by hugging her so tightly round the neck, as to suffocate her. "I love

you; but I have been very naughty all the morning."

"Oh! Hugh, what have you done?" said Anne, playing with his long curls.

"I bit nurse when she took away my horse and cart to give to baby, and I threw down the water-jug, and wetted my clothes, and I said what the parrot said."

"Oh! that parrot!" said Anne. "I hope Hugh is very sorry."

"Yes, cousin; no, cousin: I was glad, because mamma said I should be the death of her, and sent me here."

"But Hugh ought to be sorry whenever he does wrong," said Anne, kissing him again.

"Yes, cousin: may I have Noah's ark?"

Anne kept a few toys for him to play with when he came to see her. She fetched the Noah's ark, and the table was soon covered with the different animals, which she helped Hugh to arrange in order. This was an amusement that did not call for much thought,

and Hugh's little remarks and exclamations diverted her mind, and soothed her overwrought feelings.

Miss Elder came in and lent her assistance in forming the long train of birds and beasts; and told Hugh about the dove and the olive-branch, which, like other children, he was never tired of hearing.

They were still employed in this manner, Miss Elder mending a sheep that Hugh had broken, and the child on Anne's knee alternately sweeping down and setting up his animals, when a fly stopped at the door. The wind was such, that to drive along the cliff was a service of danger; and Anne had already sent Towser, as the strongest and boldest of her household, to Russell Square, to inform Mrs. Lascelles that she should not let Hugh return that night: she was, therefore, extremely surprised to see Lady Lucy get out and enter the house.

"Lucy, is anything the matter?" she ex-

claimed, going out on the stair-head to meet her.

Lucy could hardly speak.

“No, nothing,” she said, entering the drawing-room with Anne. “Mamma does not know I am here; but—I am so frightened about William; he is gone to the frigate, after all!”

“What! in this gale?” exclaimed Anne, who, engrossed with the interview of the morning, had not thought any more about the projected visit to the frigate.

“Yes, there’s not a boat out—not a boat but theirs—they went at one o’clock, and the frigate is out of sight—still, I suppose—I hope—they reached her in safety.”

“Whereabouts is she?” asked Anne, going to the telescope.

“Out in that direction—the cliff is in the way. I want to go down to the pier—they will land there, if—but I am such a coward—I dread to go alone.”

"I'll go with you," said Anne; "unless, dear Lucy, you can be prevailed upon to stay with me, and despatch a messenger to the pier to let you know when they land."

"Oh! I cannot remain within. Think what I have at stake!" exclaimed Lucy.

"I'll be ready in a moment. What time is it now?"

"Nearly five. They were to have returned by four."

"Sir Arthur is with Lord William?" said Anne.

"Yes—I ought—he has friends who would—but I cannot help it! I can think of no one but William!" exclaimed Lucy, passionately.

Anne's heart bounded with delight. Lucy was certainly not attached to Sir Arthur, or she could never speak of him in that way; and she began to hope that Sir Arthur was not attached to Lucy. She could only trust that he would not think she took too warm an interest in Lord William's safe return, by

seeing her in company with her friend ; but Lucy was not fit to go alone, and therefore, Anne felt she had no choice.

“Oh ! Anne, Anne !” exclaimed Lucy, grasping her hand as they drove along the cliff.

“Dear Lucy, you need not be alarmed,” said Anne ; “though it looks so rough, there can be no real danger ; no boatman would venture with them, if there was any actual risk.”

“Oh ! I hope not ! I hope not !” said poor Lucy, wringing her hands.

They could scarcely walk down the pier. It swung and creaked like a huge hammock. Lucy's footman followed them, holding on by the iron rails.

The sea was boiling and foaming, and dashing in showers over the esplanade ; as for the pier-head, the floor was drenched, and the spray flying in clouds high against the mast.

There was not a sail visible ; the fishing-

boats were drawn up high on the beach, and the black clouds, and the white crested waves seemed to meet all round the horizon.

"Your ladyship will be very wet," said the footman, speaking no doubt from his own sensations.

"I *am* wet, Hurst, but it does not signify," said Lady Lucy. "Anne, can you see anything?"

Anne's lustrous eyes were straining over the rough sea.

"Nothing, Lucy."

"What orders did Lord William leave, do you know, Hurst?" asked Lady Lucy.

"His Lordship desired his horses to be at the pier-gates at half-past four, my Lady. Those were my Lord's horses we passed as we came in to the pier."

"Perhaps," said Anne, after a pause, "perhaps Captain Tennyson may have persuaded them to remain all night on board as it is so rough."

"Not if William said he would return to-night," replied Lucy, despondingly.

"It is growing very dusk," said Anne, as she gazed towards the cliff that stretches out in the direction of Rottingdean.

"Don't leave me, Anne," said Lucy, in a quick faint voice.

"Leave you!" exclaimed Anne, impetuously.

"I think that is a boat, my Lady," said the footman.

"Where, Hurst? oh! it must be; Anne, what do you say?"

"Yes, yes! I can just see figures in it!"

"Good heaven how she tosses!"

Lucy clasped her hands over her face. Anne gazed without once withdrawing her eyes, on the turmoil of waters, and the dark speck tossing backwards and forwards. They made but little way. That pale head she had seen in her dream, was steadily present to her mind.

At last, after half an hour's watching, and there are some people who know what such

a half hour is like, the boat neared the pier : but how it could be brought up to the stairs, was a question. Sometimes it was dashed against the steps, sometimes driven grating alongside of the piles.

No voice could be heard, but as Lucy hung half fainting over the rails above, it seemed by his gestures as if the boatman directed them to spring out, just as the wave raised the boat against the steps.

Lord William stood up as coolly as if in his stall at the opera, sprang on the stair, and turned round when half way up to see how his companion got on. Sir Arthur was as cool as Lord William, if the boat would have let him ; but the wave which was to have raised the boat pitched her headlong on the stairs ; she split with a loud crash. There was a moment when a glare of light seemed to blind Anne's eyes, and then she saw Sir Arthur all among the spray, safe on the steps, though in the water—grasping the

boatman by the collar—and Lord William calmly bending down to offer assistance to Sir Arthur, with a very strong objection, as it seemed, to come in close contact with the waterman, who was just beginning to find his footing on the stairs.

Lucy was struggling for breath as if she had been half drowned herself, hanging feebly on Anne's arm.

"Faith, you had a narrow escape!" said Lord William, looking down on the fragments of the boat.

"Why, yes, it is a naughty night to swim in!" replied Sir Arthur, stepping on the pier at the same moment with Lord William, directly before Lucy and her friend.

Lord William gave one little quick start, and then, without showing the least surprise at seeing his sister, remarked calmly,—

"Lucy, you do very wrong to be here."

"Where else should I be?" said she, taking his hands; "thank God, you are safe!"

“You are wet through of course,” said Lord William; “what madness, and night coming on!”

“And you on that sea!” said Lucy, pointing to the roaring water, with unusual vehemence; “besides,” she added, “Miss Scawen kindly accompanied me, and I have Hurst. *I* was quite safe, William!”

“Safe! I don’t know that; good heaven! how cold and wet you are! And Miss Scawen exposed to this weather, on your account. You are too kind to my sister,” he said, turning to Anne; “I hope you may not suffer seriously from your kind compliance with her fancies.”

Anne would gladly have been silent; her feelings were overwrought; but she was obliged to answer.

“There was little room for fancy, my Lord,” she said, “the danger was too real, and there is nothing I would have refused to Lucy that might give her comfort, for

I lost a brother under somewhat similar circumstances."

Lord William was touched directly.

"Take my arm, Miss Scawen," he said, "the only thing we can do for you, is to get you home at once; and our home I believe, is nearer than yours. Arthur, look to Lucy."

They all hurried along, as fast as the wind would allow. Lord William's horses following, at a foot pace; the whole party streaming like river-gods. None of them spoke, until they reached Lady Orrington's house, and then Lord William offered Sir Arthur his horse, saying, that he was going in, and Sir Arthur accepted, and handed Lady Lucy up the steps; then, hastily taking leave of the party, he mounted, and rode off; but Anne had felt her hand pressed in the hurry of parting, though whether he had taken her for Lucy in the darkness, or whether it was a token of friendly feeling

after their scene in the morning, she could not determine.

Lucy stole softly with Anne to her dressing-room, and they were both arrayed in warm clothes, before Lady Orrington knew anything about their expedition. She was very much excited, when she found it all out ; kissed Anne repeatedly, and Lucy too, remarking at the same time, that they had behaved just like two single women, without a grain of sense to guide them.

“ You could neither of you do Bill any good,” said she, “ and you could do yourselves a deal of harm, you will have severe colds, and I only hope Anne’s won’t fall on her chest ; however, there’s a Providence above us all, and we may be thankful to the Power that has brought Bill safe back ; and I may say, Sir Arthur too ; he is a very decent young man : but come along, my dears, to dinner : and I promise you, Bill shall hear what I think of him.”

Fortunately, to accomplish this useful purpose, there remained ten minutes before dinner was ready.

Lord William was standing on the hearth-rug, looking vacantly at the opposite wall, and having given Anne a chair, and moved a little out of his mother's way, he suffered his sister to pass her arm through his, and remained, looking more frigid and indifferent than ever.

“So, sir,” said Lady Orrington, rubbing her glasses, “you have been employing yourself to very good purpose to-day, risking your life certainly in a very creditable manner;—don't tell me of it's being of little or great value, it was given you by the Almighty, for something better than to be dabbled away in the water like a fish!”

Lord William suppressed a smile at the simile which did not appear quite to run on four feet, and looked straight before him.

“Who would have thought,” pursued

Lady Orrington, looking round at the chairs and tables, "that I taught that boy every word of his church catechism, before he was seven, and all the gospels and epistles before he was nine. I wonder where he learned that people were welcome to commit suicide whenever they liked, and even to put in jeopardy the lives of poor helpless watermen with large families!"

"I trust you have not taken cold," said Lord William, addressing Anne.

"What does she know about it?" interposed Lady Orrington; "her cold will show itself exactly this time to-morrow evening, and so will Lucy's. As for you, you have done a very brave, grand thing of course; and I hope you are ashamed of yourself."

"I have frightened Lucy, madam," he said, "and I am very sorry for it. And now, perhaps you will let me take you down to dinner."

"As for you, girls," said Lady Orrington,

“not a foot do you stir into that well of a dining-room. You shall have your soup up here, and as much hot negus as you can drink. So let Hurst draw the card-table close to the fire, and make yourselves comfortable.”

CHAPTER XI.

Vio. Woman, they say, was only made of man ;
Methinks 'tis strange they should be so unlike :
It may be all the best was cut away
To make the woman, and the naught was left
Behind with him.

FLETCHER.

THEY did make themselves very comfortable. When Lady Orrington came upstairs, she found them cheerful and refreshed ; although the negus was not sufficiently diminished to relieve her hospitable feelings.

Lucy was very anxious to know whether her mother had persecuted Lord William during dinner about his escape ; for though very respectful, he was rather less submissive than her other sons, from having a remarkably strong will of his own ; and Lady

Orrington was devoid of that delicacy of nerve which knows exactly when to stop in a Philippic.

Lady Lucy's admirable disposition as a peacemaker might have lain dormant in so attached a family, were it not for a little breeze now and then between her mother and Lord William.

"Poor William, he is very much vexed, mamma!" said Lady Lucy.

"Vexed? I see no signs of it, he ate a very good dinner," said Lady Orrington. "Not that I said anything down stairs, because the servants were present; but I shall take my opportunity. So foolish every way, setting aside the wickedness; for if anything were to happen to Mote, only think what he would step into!"

"I am sure, mamma, that would never weigh with him for one instant. William has nothing mercenary in his disposition." said Lucy, her colour rising.

“Oh! well, well,” said Lady Orrington; “Bill is much better off than he was, that’s one comfort. Lady Alicia leaving him her fortune was really a sensible way of disposing of it, and, considering she was a single woman, more than I expected. I wish to goodness he would marry; but he will be an old bachelor like Mote, take my word for it; toil as I may to find him a *parti*.”

“Your ladyship is happy in having married two of your daughters,” said Anne, who knew this was the most soothing topic she could introduce: “sons can marry themselves at any time.”

“Well, my dear, yes, I do think Sir Francis was a complete stroke on my part. You never saw Sir Francis Lester, the son of a very old friend of mine; he has twenty thousand a year, and Bob used to say he was as shy as a Ptarmigan, but I laughed him into it; I used to say, ‘Why you must dance with some one, Sir Francis; I’ll do

you a good turn, I'll secure Harriet for you ; she is married, and cannot do you any harm !' and then he used to blush and stammer, and ask Adelaide, just to show he was not afraid ; and so it came about. And they are very happy, are they not, Lucy ?"

"Not unhappy, mamma," said Lady Lucy.

"Well, there it is, you don't expect to be in raptures all the days of your life, I suppose : it is that which keeps you two foolish girls single, fancying there's such a prodigious deal of happiness necessary in the marriage-state."

"But since we are neither of us very miserable now, my dear Lady Orrington," said Anne, "nothing short of this prodigious happiness will tempt us to change our condition."

"Ah ! it is very well to talk, with your face of three and twenty," said Lady Orrington ; "but when you come to be fifty, and

cannot help yourselves, then will come the trial. I hate to hear young girls boast of being such willing old maids, when they think they could change their note any day: they look sour enough, I promise you, when they have no longer the power. Do you not agree with me, Bill?"

The substance of her remark being repeated to her son, he replied in a dreary absent manner, that women were altogether above his comprehension, and let himself drop into an arm-chair near his sister.

"Arthur looks ill, I think," said Lord William, after a pause.

"Ill!" said Lady Orrington; "ah! I don't suppose any of you looked very pretty coming up the Marine Parade like a set of drowned rats. Lucy looked ill, I can bear witness to that."

"I was not speaking of to-day," said Lord William, looking anxiously at his sister.

"He is worried out of his life with that

horrid brother, I dare say," said Lady Orrington.

Lord William looked vacant, not choosing to respond to this remark.

"I am told by Mrs. Sydenham," pursued her ladyship, "that it is unknown what monstrous sums Sir Arthur paid for his brother's debts; he was going to sell out when Sir Arthur returned from India, and then what would have become of him? Why, he would have turned blackleg, or gone on the king's highway."

"He would have made a very pretty highwayman," said Lord William, coolly; "the fellow is bold enough."

"Ah! I heard of your fine doings together with the Kaffirs," said Lady Orrington; "you saved his neck once, and I don't know that you did him any kindness."

Lord William gave a short laugh, and made no reply.

"Finely embarrassed Sir Arthur's affairs are!" said Lady Orrington.

“No fault of his,” remarked Lord William; “they were as bad as could be when he came to the property.”

“And thanks to his brother, they are now rather worse !” said his mother.

“Sir Arthur knows what he is about,” replied Lord William; “his affairs will come round; he told me he should not be able to live at Elmington for the next four or five years; but that is no great hardship, he has plenty of time before him.”

“I do not know how he is to marry, though,” said Lady Orrington, with such a palpable look at Lucy, as made her colour, and Anne too.

“I never heard he had any prospect of that kind,” said Lord William; “but I should think the woman he selected a very fortunate person, even though she might be straitened in circumstances for a few years.”

“My dear, men are so apt to fancy that people can live on air,” said Lady Orrington.

"I have never discovered that turn of mind among the men I know," said Lord William; "they are much more generally disposed to look out for an heiress."

"An heiress would be a fool indeed, who threw herself away on that Captain Hardwicke," said Lady Orrington. "Mrs. Sydenham said that Miss Price, the great wine-merchant's daughter, was rather inclined to him."

"Mrs. Sydenham is an old gossip!" said Lord William, indignantly; "the Hardwicks are respectable people."

"Very respectable!" said Lady Orrington; "you heard what that amiable Alfred Hardwicke did last week."

"No, not I! I have no acquaintance with Mrs. Sydenham," said Lord William.

Anne could not help smiling to think that she depended on others for news of a family with whom she was so closely connected. She composed herself to listen.

“You need not shut your eyes,” said Lady Orrington; “this is a fact, though I did have it from Mrs. Sydenham. That wicked young man was walking out somewhere by Hove (after no good, you may be sure), and he happened to see before him an old man with a faggot on his back: what did he do but set fire to the faggot, and the poor old man knew nothing about it till he found himself in a blaze. He is now lying in a hopeless state at the County Hospital.”

“As it happens,” said Lord William, struggling not to smile, “I was with him at the time, and though I am sorry to contradict your ladyship’s friend, the old man was not burned at all, and Alfred gave him a guinea for his fright, so that he was very much delighted with the adventure.”

“How could you let him do it, my dear William?” said Lucy, looking with astonishment at her brother’s remarkably grave countenance.

"I knew nothing about it till I saw the faggot burst into a blaze," said Lord William ; "the old man was a long way ahead of us, and we had to run pretty fast to put it out in time. He had passed us it seems, as we were standing looking at the sea, and Alfred who had just lit a cigar, put his match quietly into the brushwood."

"Look at him ! he half likes it," said Lady Orrington.

"Not I, madam !" said Lord William, turning round and examining his sister's work. "When is that table-cloth to be finished, Lucy ?"

"Ask Anne," said Lucy.

"I hope it will not depend on me," said Anne ; "I have done about half an inch of the pattern."

"Did you ever see such a likeness between Captain Hardwicke and Mrs. Mordaunt," said Lucy.

"It is very striking," said Anne.

“ I remember seeing them in a tableaux, before Isabel’s marriage, as Viola and Sebastian,” said Lucy ; “ you would really have been deceived like Olivia. You must recollect that evening, William, at Lady Hardwicke’s. Harriet represented the *Poesià* of Carlo Dolce ; a picture, by the way, I never could admire.”

Lord William looked vacant, and remembered nothing.

“ I tell you what,” said Lady Orrington, “ talking of Isabel, Sir Arthur may well be anxious about *her* : his scamp of a brother may shift for himself ; but upon my word, Colonel Mordaunt goes from bad to worse.”

“ Mrs. Sydenham again ! ” said Lord William.

“ Well, my dear,” said Lady Orrington : “ Mrs. Sydenham cannot help living next door to the Mordaunts, and servants tell every thing ; besides, these houses are so thin, I am sure Lucy and I could, if we liked, hear

every word the Augustus Gordons are saying at this moment."

"Very profitable," said Lord William.

"I wonder whether there are supposed to be any limits to what a woman is required to endure from a husband," said Lucy.

"None, whatever, I think," said Anne.

"I believe not, really," said Lucy: "when a man resorts to personal violence, and that without provocation, you always hear the blame thrown upon the woman in society."

"A high nature must be a constant provocation to a low nature," said Anne.

"True," said Lucy; "and, therefore, it is all Mrs. Mordaunt's fault when Colonel Mordaunt throws the furniture at her, or shuts her hand into the window."

"Do you mean that?" asked Lord William, starting up.

"I am certain of the hand," said Lucy, "because it was disabled for a long time, and Isabel told me an improbable story of

her having let the lid of a trunk fall upon it."

"She had better have had you, Bill," said Lady Orrington.

Lord William turned abruptly away, looking as if he thought it a great liberty on the part of his mother to advance such an opinion.

"Why, mamma, since William never asked her?" said Lucy.

"Since I never asked her, as you say," remarked Lord William, stroking his sister's hair as if she were a child. All her brothers fancied her excessively young, from Lady Orrington's pitying way of talking of her.

"I have my own ideas, notwithstanding," said Lady Orrington confidentially to Anne. "There was a mighty deal of philandering between them before William went to the Cape. But he could no more have married then, than he could have flown in the air, and she had not a sixpence; so he goes off without speaking out, and the young lady takes

huff, and marries some one else. That is my private opinion."

Her private opinion happened to be correct. Anne mused over it, and the contrast that her own fate afforded to that of Isabel. She had never been so near thinking that she had done a very proper, wise thing. She had been saved at least from giving her hand in a fit of pique to a man she did not love; if any pique, or anger, or disdain, could ever have driven her to commit such an unseemly crime. Poor Mrs. Ford, she thought, the world would condemn her, and call Mrs. Mordaunt an honest woman; but how much less guilty does she appear to me. And Isabel's punishment has been the heaviest, as much as her fault has been the greatest.

Anne pitied her warmly, and would have done anything to serve her, but she had got herself into such a predicament, that nothing *could* serve her but a vial of prussic acid skilfully administered to her gallant husband.

“Now, my dear,” said Lady Orrington, “it is all very well to sit and chat, but you ought to be in bed; you are growing flushed and hot. I have ordered the carriage for you—and—can any one in your house make white wine whey? Well, then, take a cup full, and do not get up to-morrow morning.”

Anne received these instructions with becoming thankfulness, and reached her own house heavy and feverish, with every prospect of being a good deal worse on the morrow.

It was natural that Sir Arthur should call the next day as early as possible, to inquire after Lady Lucy. He was admitted, and Lady Orrington received him, but Lady Lucy was not within. She was gone down to Brunswick Terrace, to see Miss Scawen.

Lord William, who had seen him before, nodded to him over the top of his newspaper, and remarked that he believed Lady Orrington was very anxious to unburden her mind to him.

“Oh! not I,” replied Lady Orrington. “Sir

Arthur knows it is no fault of his that he is here this morning; all his friends of course are tired of him, and he is tired of himself, and therefore, he could not do better than start off again this afternoon. The wind is rising."

"Your ladyship will allow that I was in good company," said Sir Arthur.

"Not wise company, nor safe company," said Lady Orrington. "I don't think Bob would have been so silly. I don't believe little Dalmayne would have done it."

Lord William knit his brows at the name of his cousin. Sir Arthur laughed, and said he thought he might as well give Alfred a chance now and then.

"But I have not yet heard of Lady Lucy," he said.

"Oh! Lucy is pretty well," said Lady Orrington.

"I cannot think how she escaped an attack. Miss Scawen is likely to fare the worst, she

is so very delicate. She has never recovered her brother's death."

Sir Arthur looked concerned. Lord William remarked, that she was a very attractive woman.

"Yes," said Lady Orrington, "the more so, because she never tries to attract. Bill, my dear, do you know Dalmayne has a great mind to propose to her; he was talking to me about it yesterday."

"I hate the name of the fellow," said Lord William. "I believe there's not a man in town leads a lower life. I hope in heaven, she will reject him with the contempt he deserves. The Scawens have no bankers blood among them. Could you imagine," he said, turning to Sir Arthur, "a man so lost to decency as to make such a subject the theme of a morning's gossip?"

"I believe you would not be sorry to have her yourself," said Lady Orrington, laughing.

"I believe nothing of the kind," said Lord William, harshly. "I have seen the lady but

twice, but I know her family, and I know Dalmayne, and I suppose I may be allowed to observe that it would be a degrading connexion."

Sir Arthur could not help smiling, for he knew that almost every girl in London was longing so to degrade herself.

"Here comes Lucy," said Lady Orrington, "now we shall hear of Anne Scawen.

Lord William took up his paper and read hard; not choosing, after his mother's hint, to appear too interested.

But Lucy, far from her usual graceful composure, came in fluttered and agitated, and sinking down on the sofa beside the Marchioness, burst into tears.

"Hey! Lucy, my dear, cheer up, what is the matter?" said Lady Orrington; "did the horses run away? I did not quite like the pair of bays we had last."

Lord William crossed over, and sat by his sister.

"She is very ill. I am sure, mamma, it is serious," sobbed Lucy. "She has been growing worse all night, and the physician has ordered leeches and all sorts of things, and I brought it all upon her! I am sure she thinks very badly of herself, for she said she should like to be at Datchley. It seemed as if she foreboded—"

Lucy could say no more, but buried her face in her handkerchief.

"Don't go, Arthur, it is nothing," said Lord William.

But Sir Arthur, hastily making his adieux to Lady Orrington, hurried from the room, pursued to the stair-head by Lord William who "wished to ride with him at four."

"Nonsense, foreboding! my dear Lucy," said her mother, as Lord William resumed his place by his sister. "Did you ever hear such stuff, Bill? There is nothing to be alarmed at, she only wants a little good nursing; if I were to count up all the leeches I have

had on, I am sure they would cover that round table: there is no consumption about Anne; though that poor, peaking Miss Elder does not know how to nurse her, I'll be bound!"

"Isabel is with her," said Lucy. "She seems to have taken quite a fancy to Anne. She happened to call early in the morning, and she would not leave her."

"Ah! that's well," said Lady Orrington. "As to her wanting to go to Datchley, I do not wonder at that, one has none of one's comforts about one in a barn of a lodging-house. I may say the same thing of myself, when I have the rheumatism; by the way, I will just ring and ask if they have any grits in the house."

"It is of no use, madam," said Lord William, very gravely, rising and ringing the bell for his mother—"it is of no use poisoning Lucy with grits, when she is uneasy in her mind. I should say you had better go and see Miss Scawen yourself, if you feel equal

to the exertion. You could judge better than Lucy how she was."

"My dear, what do you know about grits?" said Lady Orrington; "they are not to eat, people make gruel of them; and, as it happens, I was not thinking of Lucy, who would be all the better for a glass of port wine—(Burton, the port, and ask the housekeeper for those particular Scotch grits)—but of Anne Scawen, who, of course has no idea of nursing herself, and who would never think of taking the only proper thing for her, which is—a good large basin of gruel!"

"Oh! thank you, mamma, I shall feel so much more comfortable," said Lucy. "I may have been too easily frightened, but I felt it was all my work."

"All *his* work, if you like, and a very pretty day's work it turns out," said Lady Orrington; "the carriage is below, I'll go at once."

Lucy waited in anxious suspense until her

mother's return, Lord William trying to enliven her by reading out, in a very monotonous tone, sundry fragments of the leading article in the *Times*.

"I tell you what, my dear," said Lady Orrington, when she came back, "there's no denying that Anne has a sharp attack of inflammation, and Harper looks grave. I have half a mind to write for Cosset. What do you say?"

"As sure as you do, madam, I'll throw him off the cliff," said Lord William.

"As I went in," she added, "there was Sir Arthur standing at the door. I suppose he wanted to see his sister."

CHAPTER XII.

But now helpe God to quench al this sorow,
So hope I that he shal, for he beste may,
For I have sene of a fol misty morow,
Folowen ful oft a mery somir's day,
And aftir wintir foloweth grene May.

CHAUCER.

It was wonderful how often Sir Arthur seemed to wish to speak to his sister, so long as the straw remained down in front of Brunswick Terrace.

Mrs. Mordaunt's light step traversed the stairs some three times a day, till Anne was pronounced out of danger; and Lady Orrington had left off sighing for Cosset to come and galvanise her. She had a very severe and painful attack on the lungs, which left her in a weak reduced state for some time.

Lucy was almost in despair during the five days that Anne's danger lasted ; reproaching herself as the cause of her friend's illness : though Lady Orrington never failed, when Lord William was in the room, to point him out as the author of the mischief, and to make some indistinct allusions to the Church Catechism.

By way of atonement, he called at the house as often as Sir Arthur, to bring his sister news early and late of Miss Seawen's progress ; till the next-door neighbours, who were interested in Anne's doings, as Brighton neighbours mostly are, did not know which of the two to proclaim as her intended. They were likewise much puzzled by a groom belonging to the Duke of Dalmayne, who came daily to inquire, for his master, and whom they had distinctly made out *not* to belong either to Lord William or Sir Arthur.

Intimacies grow up quickly in a sick room. Anne felt as if she had known Mrs. Mordaunt five years instead of five days, so did Miss

Elder, who was very timid in illness, and who clung to Mrs. Mordaunt like a drowning person; and would not give Anne a glass of lemonade, or a cup of tea without her sanction.

Anne remembered her last severe illness, with its frightful convalescence, when every day's increasing strength but served to deepen her perception of mental suffering, and she could not feel sufficiently grateful for the ease of mind she now enjoyed in her progress towards health. Surrounded by kind and watchful friends she felt a sort of languid enjoyment in the repose and twilight, and dreamy indolence of her present existence.

A pause—a hush, in a life that has been too full of action, or of feeling, is a luxury,—Mrs. Mordaunt enjoyed the pause as much as Anne, and declared she would not exchange the quiet sick room for the gayest house in Brighton. She was able to devote herself completely to it at present, for Colonel Mordaunt was not

in Brighton. He had given his wife no intimation of his residence: but all the world knew he was in Leicestershire for a few weeks' hunting, where his solitude was enlivened by the society of a celebrated dancer.

Anne's dressing-room was transformed into a Castle of Indolence, with the couch drawn on one side of the fire, piled thick with cushions and pillows for herself, and the two low deep arm-chairs on the other side for her two companions. The tea-table in front of the hearth spread at that early hour—five o'clock—with every delicacy that did belong to that dainty repast, when our ancestor's were wise, and made a meal of it; while the blazing fire cast a red glow into every corner of the small room and the dark damask curtains already drawn before the window, excluded the waning light which fell (as the room looked backwards) on no more agreeable objects than a collection of chimney tops, and shabby uneven house walls.

"I have just refused Lucy admittance," said Mrs. Mordaunt, entering and dropping into her chair by the side of Miss Elder.

"Oh! I might have seen Lucy," said Anne.

"She was on horseback with Lord William; would you have had him in too?" said Mrs. Mordaunt, laughing.

"Why, hardly, my dear Isabel."

"I am sure he has been very tender in his inquiries," said Mrs. Mordaunt.

"I only hope then, he will be so good as to continue in that frame till I get about again," said Anne. "Lord William *tender*, would be a sight worth seeing."

"I detest men with soft manners," said Mrs. Mordaunt.

"He will stand high in your favour then," said Anne.

"Don't you like him?" asked Mrs. Mordaunt.

"I like all the Sherwoods," said Anne;

“they are not like others of their class ; they are individuals, and all of them high principled ; but of Lucy’s brothers I think I like Lord William the least.”

“ I understand—*Lucy’s brothers*—that is their claim upon your interest.”

“ A very strong claim,” said Anne.

“ Oh ! *I* can’t endure him—I merely asked,” said Mrs. Mordaunt.

Anne thought she knew better, but she said nothing.

“ Please, Ma’am, you are wanted,” said Towser, appearing suddenly behind Mrs. Mordaunt’s chair.

“ Bless the man ! I have seen him once to-day,” said Mrs. Mordaunt, setting down her tea-cup.

“ I am afraid Mrs. Mordaunt is in some uncertainty about her husband,” said Miss Elder.

“ I am afraid there is no uncertainty left for her,” said Anne, “ except, indeed, as to

the period of his return. I wonder she does not obtain a regular separation."

"Perhaps she feels it her duty to remain with him," said Miss Elder.

"More likely that he opposes it from perverseness," said Anne.

"There is something pending," said Miss Elder; "I think there can be no doubt of that. Sir Arthur has called to speak with her two or three times a day."

A shade of vexation passed over Anne's face, for she had half entertained a hope that these frequent visits had been on her account; but Miss Elder's explanation was so much the most rational that she could not but accept it. She had but a low estimate of her powers of attraction, and nothing had passed the few times she had seen him, likely to alter the sentiments that his letter had so decidedly expressed.

"Only Arthur," said Mrs. Mordaunt, as she returned, and took her seat with some-

thing of a pettish air. "Oh ! thank you, Miss Elder, I knew my tea would get cold. And I have kept you waiting."

"My dear Mrs. Mordaunt, I have the evening before me. I know you ordered the carriage at six. There it is."

Miss Elder was going to one of her friends—the first time she had left the house since Anne's illness.

"I will take excellent care of Anne,—send her to bed at nine, and flavour her arrow-root myself," said Mrs. Mordaunt, shaking hands with Miss Elder.

"I am selfish enough to hope that Colonel Mordaunt is not about to return," said Anne, when they were alone. "I cannot hope to see so much of you then."

"No," said Mrs. Mordaunt ; "that is, he comes when he will, he does not send me word."

They never discussed her husband, therefore Anne made no reply.

"Here is a letter, shall you be able to read it?" asked Mrs. Mordaunt, taking one from Towser, who entered, bearing it on a salver.

"From Lady Orrington," said Anne, examining the large armorial seal. "If you will be so kind, my dear Isabel, as my head is but weak, there can be no secrets in her ladyship's letters."

"I don't know that," said Isabel, taking the letter from its envelope; "suppose it should be an offer from Lord William.

"Suppose, indeed!" said Anne, laughing.

"Well, listen :—

" ' MY DEAR ANNE,

" ' I am deputed by my nephew, the Duke of Dalmayne, who I suppose mistrusts his own spelling, to make you an offer of his hand.

" ' I have no idea, any more than he has himself, of the amount of his income, it ought to be something immense, but he best knows where it is all gone.

“ “I do not know what to say in his favour except that he is good-natured, and that he says he has been devotedly attached to you for the last six years. I do not believe him, but he promises to reform all his bad courses if you will take pity on him. So my dear, you may send me a line in reply to this. And have the goodness to imagine all the rhodomontade that he wishes me to write ; for the rheumatism has fixed itself in my shoulder, and I find it inconvenient to be more diffuse on that head. Bill and Lucy bring me still improved accounts of you.

“ “Ever your affectionate

“ “HARRIET ORRINGTON.”

“Capital !” said Anne. She thought Isabel had done what she had often seen Lord Robert do, when his mother asked him to read out a letter, invent any improbable nonsense that came into his head.

Isabel threw herself back in her chair, laughing.

“Well, but what is it really?” asked Anne.

“Too good news to be true, you think,” said Mrs. Mordaunt.

“How vexatious!” said Anne, glancing over the letter; “I must send an answer, and my hand shakes so, that it will look as if I regret my decision.”

“And you actually have the courage to say no!”

“It is easy enough to say no,” said Anne, “I wish I found it as easy to write.”

“Oh! you are doing it very creditably,” said Isabel, “I suppose I may look over; a proper allowance of regret, and a very stout determination not to become a duchess. How the odious little wretch will stare! to find a woman, living, who can refuse him!—Give you joy; he would make a villainous husband!”

“ I like him extremely,” said Anne ; “ I don’t think him odious,—I think he is very likely to reform, when he marries.”

“ Then, my dear, what in the name of all the saints, can make you throw away such an opportunity.”

“ Because I have no affection for him, but I shall be very glad to hear, that he makes a suitable connexion. I know his friends had some apprehension not long ago about an opera-girl, whom he was said to adore.”

“ So much for his devoted attachment to you !” said Isabel.

“ I never believed a syllable of that, of course,” said Anne ; “ it simply meant that every now and then he gave me a thought, when not otherwise engaged.”

“ Certainly you are not vain,” said Mrs. Mordaunt.

“ I do not know ; I think I am handsome, but not attractive,” replied Anne ; “ many

handsome women are not, Lucy is not,—I mean, of course, to the other sex. They don't like calm women."

"A good thing, too," said Isabel, "if it should keep you single, that is to say—"

"Most likely," said Anne.

"How many a woman has wished that she had been born a man," said Mrs. Mordaunt; "but there never yet was a man wished he had been born a woman."

"Naturally," said Anne; "between the conditions of master and slave, every one would choose the former."

"Wretched lot!" said Mrs. Mordaunt, in a low voice, as if speaking to herself. "Courage is much more needed for a woman than for a man. The conventions of society, are all opposed to her! With what more than Spartan endurance she is forced to struggle through the task of hollowness that is set before her! How her natural feelings are veiled by custom! And how she is com-

pelled to glide through her allotted measure, in this dance of death, when her whole soul is steeped in anguish and tears; and to do it smiling too, or the sacrifice is incomplete !”

“Often !—often !—” said Anne. She had experienced a little of it herself; it is good practice, but not very pleasant.

“I know what men are, and what they demand of women !” continued Isabel, whose feelings seemed suddenly unlocked, though she mentioned no names; “and I do not so much complain of their tyranny, as of the absurd inconsistency of their demands. They wish you to be all weakness, and all strength, all ignorance, and all knowledge, all sensibility to their feelings and affairs, and nerved with iron, when your own are trampled and torn. Nothing can exceed the severity of their judgment, on the conduct of women until they fall; and then, nothing can equal the clemency of their opinion; thus, forming

a system, the very best that can be devised to induce our sex to become guilty."

"But this only applies to the worst men," interposed Anne.

"You are surrounded by the worst men," replied Isabel; "good men are very thinly scattered over the world. No," she added with a laugh, "black swans have become common enough, but it does not follow that all other scarce things have become common also. You are better single, Anne."

"I wish Lady Orrington could hear you," said Anne, smiling.

"She might; I cannot suppose her experience to have been very delightful," said Isabel.

"I can remember as a child, Lord Orrington very polite to her," said Anne; "she used to talk to him just as she does to her sons."

"What! another letter?" said Mrs. Mor-daunt, stretching out her hand for it, as

Towser entered again, "you must keep a secretary, Anne."

"For you, Ma'am," said Towser.

Mrs. Mordaunt glanced at the hastily folded scrawl, containing but two lines, turned pale, crushed it in her hand, and said in a low voice,—

"He is come: there is an old proverb, and if I was not talking of him, I was thinking of him; I must go home, to receive him."

"Let me order the carriage," said Anne.

"My dear, I cannot wait for that," said Isabel with an ironical smile; "he seems in a hurry, he has been absent so long."

"And when shall I see you again?" said Anne, holding her hand.

"Soon, I have no doubt," replied Isabel; "he seldom remains long; he comes upon business, but he does not fancy being kept waiting; and so, Anne, good-bye."

She kissed her, and left the room hastily, and Anne did not seek to detain her for a

moment, having gathered from Lucy, that the amiable Colonel was apt to express his displeasure in a very energetic manner.

Towser brought in her work, and placing herself at a respectful distance from the arm-chairs, disposed herself to remain in attendance until Miss Elder should return.

The evening waned ; Anne was half asleep, and Towser was making her arrow-root over the fire, when the door opened, and Mrs. Mordaunt came hastily into the room, and sank on the foot-stool by the side of Anne's couch, gasping, white, trembling in every limb, not with terror, but with passion.

"Anne," said she, "the time is come,—I am free !"

"Dear Isabel, what has happened ?" said Anne, rising, and throwing her arms round her.

She flung down her bonnet, and seemed struggling for breath.

Towser unasked, brought her a glass of

water, and then snatching up her arrow-root, vanished down stairs.

“Anne, I have waited for this,” said Isabel; “I thought it would come soon or late; I knew no other indignity would clear my name in leaving his roof, and it is done,—he has brought his dancer home with him!”

Anne gazed at her in mute astonishment.

“To my house—introduced her—bade me welcome her—insulted me! There is no man, who would not have defended him hitherto. I would not have relied on my own brothers to take my part,—he has done a hundred worse things,—outraged me, debased me more; but they will admit *this* to be an error—a weakness!”

“Oh, Isabel!—wretch! wretch!” Anne exclaimed, hardly less moved than her friend.

“To force me to do homage to Mdlle. Fanchon,—to seat her at the head of his table. I ought to be glad—I don’t know

why I tremble—I thought he had broken my arm—but I escaped.”

She laughed scornfully, with quivering nostrils, then shrinking together, she remained crouching in front of the fire, trying to get warm.

Anne was alert in a moment, as if she had never been ill ; she went out and brought Isabel some hot wine and water,—she sat by her, and chafed her hands.

“ Perhaps he will trace me here,” said Isabel, looking up wildly ; “ he cannot take me out of this house, can he ? ”

“ Had we not better send off directly to—to your brothers ? ” said Anne, starting up ; “ they could tell you what to do.”

“ Oh ! no—no—” said Isabel.

“ Why not ? ”

“ Simply because either of them would go out with Mordaunt to-morrow morning ; and he is a dead shot,” said Isabel.

Anne sank down on the sofa again, she had not thought of that.

"Isabel, our best plan is to start off at once for Datchley," said Anne after a short pause.

"Dear, generous creature!" said Isabel, "it is out of the question,—you would die of it. No—no—a thousand times no," she repeated, as Anne urged that she was strong enough, that she would go.

"Will you venture by yourself, with Towser?—you will be safe there," said Anne. "I will direct my bailiff to hold the house against all comers;—you do not know Master George,—he would rather enjoy it, I think."

"Dear Anne, I will go directly."

"Oh, in half an hour all shall be ready; I must make a confidante of Towser; she is trustworthy."

"Oh! Anne, how thankful I feel," exclaimed Isabel; "Datchley will be a haven to me."

Anne shivered. So she had once thought. She rang for Towser.

"I want you, Towser, to be very useful to me," said Anne, laying her hand on the damsel's shoulder.

"All right, Miss Anne!" said Towser, smiling broadly at her old appellation.

"It is needful that Mrs. Mordaunt should instantly set off for Datchley, and that it should not be talked about; I wish you to put up some clothes and go with Mrs. Mordaunt, and you will go from me to Mrs. Ford's and her son, and beg them to take up their residence in my house for the present; and desire Master George not to let any person cross the threshold, without first having received permission from Mrs. Mordaunt. You understand me."

"Oh, yes, Miss Anne," said Towser, nodding her head, and lowering her voice. "I know all about it; we all do: something fresh up yonder, I suppose."

"I wish I could avoid the servants knowing," Anne began.

“Look here, Miss Anne,” said Towser, warming with her subject, “me and Mrs. Mordaunt start off in a fly, and call as we go along for your carriage; tell ’em to put in four posters, and follow us on the London road. The son of the livery stables is in love with me, he is; he will do it all the faster for that. I shan’t stop to put up any clothes with me, I have got some at Datchley, and you give me the key of your oak wardrobe for anything Mrs. Mordaunt will want, and your purse for posting—that’s not the key, oh, yes—bless you, here’s more than enough—and we had better be off at once. Good bye, Miss Anne,—I’ll give your love to Missis.”

Towser here retired into the adjoining room for her bonnet and cloak, and Anne going up to Mrs. Mordaunt, who was still warming herself before the fire, crouching on the rug, knelt beside her.

“It is settled, dear Isabel,” she said; “if

you will do exactly as Towser directs you ; I will not trouble you with the details, you will find her much more fit to act than either of us ; let me put on your things—here is another shawl—and hurry you away at once ; I have a strange fear of your husband coming to seek you.”

“ Anne, what can I say ? you are saving my reason, I am sure, if not my life,” said Isabel.

Towser appeared at the door—they embraced most affectionately. Isabel slipped down noiselessly after her guide.

When Miss Elder returned half an hour afterwards, she found Anne sitting by the fire in one of the arm-chairs, looking much more alert and well than when she had left her.

“ It has done me good, I believe,” said Anne, after she had related what had passed to her friend ; “ there is something in action that is congenial to me.”

“Provided it goes no farther, my dear,” said Miss Elder; “but I hope—I wonder what that dreadful man will do.”

“I will tell you what he *is doing*, ringing at my door,” said Anne. “Mercy, what a peal!”

“My dear,” said Miss Elder, looking timidly about, “suppose you were to send to Lady Orrington.”

“Not quite time for that,” said Anne, as a knock at her door was followed by the entrance of her old servant’s face.

“I beg your pardon, Ma’am,” said Johnson, “I cannot find Jane below—here is a card, and a gentleman desires to see you on urgent business.”

“Tell Colonel Mordaunt,” said Anne, taking up the card, “that I am unable to see him or any one at present: that I am an invalid, confined to my room.”

Miss Elder breathed again.

“Oh! that is excellent, my dear, that is

the best thing possible—he must go now !” she kept repeating.

But Johnson appeared again with a much graver face.

“ The gentleman insists Ma’am, upon having an interview with you,” he said ; “ he declares that he will not take up many minutes of your time, but that it may be a means of preventing a disagreeable scene. I don’t know what he means, but I observed when I let him in, that two policemen were standing by the railing.”

Miss Elder clasped her hands, and sank back quite overpowered. Anne laughed.

“ Well, if he is so urgent,” she said, “ take candles into the drawing-room, and show him up. I don’t owe any money, Johnson, you need not hesitate. Remain on the landing with Thomas, and if I ring, come in at a moment.”

“ It’s Colonel Mordaunt, Ma’am,” said Johnson.

“ I know,” said Anne.

“ I thought about Mrs. Mordaunt, Ma'am.”

The servants knew all about Mrs. Mordaunt, as Towser had said—they knew much more than Anne, what she had endured.

“ Mrs. Mordaunt is gone home,” said Anne, coolly.

Johnson went down incredulous, he thought she was hidden in one of the wardrobes.

Anne, with Miss Elder's help, put on a velvet dress and a large shawl, and went down into the drawing-room.

Colonel Mordaunt was already there. He looked a handsome ruffian, his face half hidden by the profusion of black hair he cultivated. Miss Elder trembled from head to foot at the sight of him; Anne rather liked the affair. She sank into a chair, because she was still very weak, and signed to him to be seated.

His manners were exceedingly soft. Anne thought it was no wonder Isabel disliked soft manners. He regretted excessively to have

been compelled to disturb Miss Scawen, but he was under the extremest anxiety respecting Mrs. Mordaunt; he understood that she was paying a visit to Miss Scawen.

No: Anne regretted to say, she had been deprived of Mrs. Mordaunt's society early in the evening; she believed Mrs. Mordaunt had returned home.

He was extremely sorry to touch upon such a topic, *but* Mrs. Mordaunt was apt to be very fanciful in her conduct, he was therefore under considerable alarm when he did not know where she was; he had some reason to think she was in that house.

Considering all this, thought Anne, how coolly you leave her for weeks and months together. She made an effort to modulate her voice, and said mildly,—

“I assure you, Colonel Mordaunt, that Mrs. Mordaunt is not in this house. I thoroughly understood what I said when I stated that she had left it.”

He began to scowl, though his manners were still smooth. Poor Miss Elder's teeth actually chattered.

"I regret very much that I cannot implicitly receive your assertion," he said; "I am convinced that Mrs. Mordaunt is here; and however painful it would be to me to take any steps that might alarm you, I shall be obliged, I shall feel it my duty—"

Anne's glittering eyes were fixed upon him with an expression he did not like. He looked down, and went on in a lower tone:—

"If you do not give her up, I shall feel it my duty to search the house."

Anne started to her feet and pulled the bell with such a sudden jerk that Johnson and Thomas sprang into the room like a couple of greyhounds.

"Call up those two policemen who are down below," she said, extending her arm towards the window; "and let them search all that part of the house which belongs to

me. I conclude, as the ladies below had not the pleasure of Mrs. Mordaunt's acquaintance, your duty will not lead you to intrude upon them," she said, turning to Colonel Mordaunt with a contempt that cannot be expressed in words.

The servants looked from one to the other in amazement. Colonel Mordaunt signed to them to stop.

He had not expected that Anne would take the order out of his hands; he thought, not being a judge of physiognomy, that he should have frightened her, and that she would have given up Mrs. Mordaunt to him to torment. And he was in society, at least not quite out of it, and therefore, though he would talk about searching the house, he would not have done it, unless much provoked. And he began to think that Isabel was not there after all, or Anne would never have been so ready to invite a search.

He thought he would try a little coaxing.

“Nothing would give me more concern than to be the means of causing you any alarm,” he said; “but you can form no idea of my anxiety—may I hope that your compassion will induce you to inform me where I shall find Mrs. Mordaunt?”

“You have presumed to threaten me. I hold no more conversation with you,” said Anne, fixing on him a look of disdain. Then turning away she walked to the fire-place where she could keep an eye on his movements, in the mirror. He stammered a little,—he tried to apologize, he talked of his feelings; but finding that Anne kept her head steadily in the same direction, he left the room, and Miss Elder breathed a sincere thanksgiving as she heard the hall-door close after him.

“And now, Miss Elder, I am fairly tired,” replied Anne, leaning her head on her friend’s shoulder. “I shall go to bed at once.”

CHAPTER XIII.

Ar. Stay—I love you—if my pride,
Because you had forgotten me, revolted
From seeking you again, I can no longer
Keep up the wretched semblance of disdain.
This heart is yours ; say will you take it, lady ?

* * * * *

Can such true love depart except with life ?
Can coldness freeze it ? can unkindness wither ?
Can sorrow crush this passion ? Never, never !

ANON.

ANNE felt it more the next morning. She was very weak, and shook like a leaf when she attempted to walk into her dressing-room : but she was restless and animated, and rose in time for breakfast, which she had not done before.

“ They are at Datchley by this time, Miss

Elder," she said, raising her tea-cup with a trembling hand.

"I think so, my dear. I do hope that shocking man will not take any farther steps. Would it not be better to write to Lady Orrington?"

"No, I do not wish to mix her up in the matter; most people dislike interfering between husband and wife; it is ten to one they don't take Colonel Mordaunt's part, and abuse Isabel as an abandoned woman, for not staying to do the honours to Madlle. Fanchon. I rather wish he would follow her to Datchley. Master George would give him a reception. I should not be afraid of the result."

"He is come again, I declare!" exclaimed Miss Elder, shrinking away from the salver which the housemaid—Towser's substitute for the present,—offered at the door.

"No, it is Sir Arthur," said Anne, taking up the card: "'entreats to see me for a moment.' He wishes to hear about his sister,

no doubt,—very natural. I'll come, Hannah. Perhaps, my dear Miss Elder, you will give me your arm to the door."

"You are not fit for all this bustle, my dear," said her friend.

"I was stronger last night, indeed," she said, as she slowly descended the stairs. Sir Arthur was in the room, looking very pale and harassed. When she closed the door and saw a long space between her and the sofa, she felt dismayed. She did not know how she should contrive to reach it, but he was at her side in an instant, and drew her hand through his arm.

"You are very weak, still," he said, as he led her across the room. "You have had a dangerous illness!"

A mere fact as far as the words went, but there was something so feeling in his manner.

"I am much better," she said, "only a little shaken."

And she sank into her corner of the sofa,

feeling (it is the worst of women when they are weak) very much inclined to cry.

“I reproach myself for asking to see you,” he said; “but I am in the most painful suspense about my sister, and I have just a hope that you may know where she is,”

“I do,” said Anne.

“Thank God!” he said. He took her hand and kissed it fervently. “You have removed such a weight from my mind. I hardly hoped it, I had heard a terrible report, and this one chance remained.”

“She came to me in great trouble last night. I sent her down to Datchley with my maid, they travelled all night, they must be arrived by this time,” she said.

“To Datchley!” he exclaimed, looking delighted. “That was most kind! That you should protect her, that you should stand her friend, and in a case where so many women would shrink from taking a responsible part; and *my* sister! is your nature free from every

shade of weakness? have you no resentment? no failings at all?"

There was a tenderness in his voice that convinced her as much as if he had said so, that he loved her. She could very well wait his own time for the avowal.

"I have a great affection for Isabel," she said; "and I hope I feel no resentment towards—any one."

"God bless you for it! You have cause enough," he said.

Anne felt her spirits rise. She saw her power—she knew that all must come right at last. She had no wish, though she *was* weak, to shorten the interview.

"What has Colonel Mordaunt told you?" she asked.

"He saw Alfred this morning. He said that Isabel had left her home; and he insinuated that she had—a companion."

"Who could he fix upon?" she asked eagerly.

Sir Arthur hesitated: much as if he felt it to be absurd, now that he was better informed. At last he brought out the name of Lord William Sherwood.

“Oh, poor dear Lord William!” exclaimed Anne: “he is a victim! a martyr! to be first accused of a proper fancy for one person, and then of an improper fancy for another! and if ever there was a man who had no fancies at all, I should say it was himself. Well! he looks as if he liked to be persecuted.”

Sir Arthur smiled, and looked half-reproachfully at her.

“There was some colour to the report,” he said; “for they told me just now at Lady Orrington’s, that Lord William had left Brighton, and it was uncertain when he would return.”

“True, but though I am not in his confidence, generally, I know this time where he is gone.”

“You do?”

"He is gone to town to buy Lucy some gold thread."

"Really?"

"Really. When I was last there, I heard him promise to bring her some in a few days; and I saw her write the direction in his pocket-book. He might have other business, possibly, but not, I think, of the nature ascribed to him."

"You make me ashamed of my credulity," said Sir Arthur.

"Where we are very deeply concerned, we believe good or ill, perhaps, too easily," said Anne, gently.

"I have done so, before now," he said, in a low tone.

Anne wondered — but no—he said no more.

"I should think," she remarked, with an arch gravity in her eyes, "that it would be a great comfort to Isabel, if you were to go down to Datchley, and consult with her.

She must feel very uneasy about her future relations with Colonel Mordaunt."

"It is what I should most wish," replied Sir Arthur; "if I might presume—"

"Oh! I will give you a formal invitation, since you will not condescend—"

She stopped and coloured.

"I must beg you to give me my writing-case," she said. "I must write you an order of admission, for the house is in a state of siege," she added, as she addressed a few lines to Master George. "When you come to the gate, you will see, I hope, a very fierce looking young man with a great oaken staff, but if you give him this note, you will not be obliged to storm the castle."

"Thank you, for myself. As to Isabel, I cannot thank you enough for her. What she would have done without you I cannot tell; for she has now no mother to receive her."

"It seems I am permitted to stand for Isabel's *mother*," said Anne, smiling.

"You are laughing at me, I see," said Sir Arthur, but he looked delighted.

"Well, are you not going directly to Datchley? I think my daughter will be so rejoiced to see you."

"I need not be in a hurry," said Sir Arthur; "I must get leave first. I have not yet made a single inquiry about your health. I have been so engrossed by a more important question:—yes,—more important than life itself—the honour of a woman!"

"You are right!" said Anne, quickly. She had not the old Norman blood for nothing; it flashed all through her veins at whatever she felt to be a lofty sentiment.

"Such fearless kindness as you showed then, too," he said; "and such an illness!—when I think how it was occasioned."

"Ah! there was Lord William, again," said Anne.

He smiled this time;—he seemed to have got over his fear of Lord William.

“Did you know that Colonel Mordaunt paid me a visit, last night?” she said, quickly; “for she began to fear a pause; she was growing nervous.

“No!—the scoundrel!”

“He did. Miss Elder was almost frightened to death. I own to you I enjoyed it. He wanted to find Isabel. I told him nothing, and I made him look very foolish by offering to call up his policemen, to search the house.”

“Policemen! an insolent fellow! But, of course, you would not send for me! You would not give me the satisfaction of protecting you! It seems denied to me to serve you in any way!”

“He did not stay long,” said Anne.

She began to feel faint—for she had overtasked her strength. She quietly opened her *flacon*, and poured some eau de cologne on her hands.

He started from his chair, and seated himself by her side.

“ You are ill ! ” he exclaimed ; “ shall I—must I—leave you ! ”

“ No : I am better,” she said : “ what day—shall you go down—to Datchley ? ” and having got through this very simple question, she burst into tears.

“ Anne ! ” he exclaimed, suddenly pressing her to his heart, “ I once promised that I would make amends to you for all the anxiety I caused you—it was no idle pledge,—I have not forgotten it at any moment of my life.”

So many questions rushed into her mind, that she asked none at all.

“ The time has been long coming, but it is come at last. I no longer doubt myself, nor you. I *can* make you happy, and I dare to claim your hand.”

She suffered him to take it—to rest her head on his shoulder : by degrees she grew calmer, and said something about Datchley again.

“Oh! by the way, where is Datchley?” he asked.

“Where is Elmington?” she said, blushing at her daring, when she had said it.

“I will tell you, when you mean to go there,” he replied.

“People do not go to places where they have never been asked,” said Anne. “I invited you to Datchley.”

“You know how near my heart it is to ask you; you know I have not had the courage; you know I have not had a moment’s peace since I first saw you,” said Sir Arthur.

“I do not know the least in the world, anything of the kind,” said Anne. “I know there was never any one in such a fright as you were, when you wrote me a certain letter, lest I should accept your very pressing offer.”

“What could I do?” he said; “I had received no answer to my former letter; I felt assured that you heartily regretted the

step you had taken ; I could not justify to myself the share I had in it ; it appeared to me then the simplest act of justice to leave you perfectly free in your choice."

"Free ! only hear him !" exclaimed Anne ; "free to say, no, certainly—and that might have been, perhaps, a very valuable permission, if—

She thought of her strange mistake about Captain Hardwicke, and laughed a little.

"Did you know me again ?" he asked.

"Not the least ; you are so altered, I hardly believe, now, that you are the original Arthur Hardwicke."

"No :—am I ?" he said, half rising, and looking in the glass, "I dare say I am, I knew you instantly. You were driving on the cliff with Mrs. ——. What's the name of the woman Alfred is so struck with ?"

"Dear me, I must inquire about that ; I am left a sort of guardian to that woman, by her husband, Captain Lascelles, for *I* am grown so old, that I am set to watch some

married ladies, besides being looked upon as a mother to others ; where people have a natural objection to my being considered as their sister."

" Anne ! Anne ! "

" Well, Sir Arthur. "

" I have been in the wrong from beginning to end ; I have committed one blunder after another ; it is time to put an end to this. "

" So I should think. "

" What day will you give me this hand again ? "

" Why, you had better think it over, before you say anything more about that. Wait till you return from Datchley. "

" I cannot wait ; I have waited too long. "

" Well, if you should come back in the same mind, we will see. "

" I don't think I shall go to Datchley, at all, now. "

" You must, indeed, go. Think of poor Isabel ! "

“ Will you, as soon as possible, announce our engagement to Lady Orrington? It will put a stop to—”

Anne looked up archly : she would not say a word to help him.

“ Why, though you may laugh, Lord William admires you more than enough, and there is Lord Robert just come down ; the first thing I heard, when I came to Brighton, from Elmington, was, that you were engaged to one of the Sherwoods. And then there’s the Duke of Dalmaine.”

“ Ah ! there *is* a rival ! ” said Anne. “ But as soon as I can muster up assurance enough, I will tell Lady Orrington : people will think it is rather a short acquaintance.—Here is Miss Elder.”

Anne introduced them. He rose gravely, looking as he used to do at Parkindale, when any one was present, perfectly tranquil.

“ I shall write to you from Datchley,” he said, calmly, to Anne.

“I do not much like your style of writing,” said Anne; “but I shall be glad to hear of Isabel.”

He laughed a little, pressed her hand, and took his leave.

“I began to be afraid, my dear, that he never would go away,” said Miss Elder, anxiously.

CHAPTER XIV.

Lam. Here take your honoured wife and joyn your hands.
She hath married you again.

Honest Man's Fortune.

ANNE took courage to tell Lady Orrington of her engagement one day that she had called to give her a little medical advice: perhaps she would have put it off longer, but Sir Arthur returned from Datchley that very day, and it was better to be known. Lady Orrington, whose plans for Lucy, were always of the most vague and hopeless description, was very glad to hear the news. She was inclined to look on the bright side of everything.

“He will make you a very good husband,”

she said, "and you have fortune enough to marry a man who is not rich—Lucy has not—and as for Bob, who I have sometimes thought would have done for you, he is just as well minding his business for the next eight or ten years!"

Lady Orrington's own plans and affairs were never long kept private; she never cared who was informed of them; and the affairs of other people were made just as public, when they came into her keeping. She told all her family how Anne had refused the Duke of Dalmayne, and even showed her letter to Lord William. He was in a state of serene enjoyment the whole day afterwards: and told Sir Arthur, with his abrupt laugh, what had happened to his cousin, when he next met him; adding, that the Duke had cried at his disappointment, which is possible; as he was not used to be thwarted in his fancies.

One mild sunny morning early in De-

cember, Anne was walking up the cliff, attended by Johnson, to Lady Orrington's house, where she was engaged to spend the day.

She did not observe a slight little man, who turned and stared very hard at her as he passed; till, after he had walked on a few steps, he came hastily back, and stood just in front of her, so as to bar her passage.

"I thought so; it is you!" he exclaimed.

"Lord Inchcape!" said Anne.

"Ah! Lord Inchcape," he repeated, in a very discontented tone, "come—how are you? Will you shake hands?"

Anne complied.

"Do you make it up?" he asked.

"I do," returned Anne, laughing.

"Yes, it was likely I should forget *you*; though you did give me the cut direct," he said.

"I'm very sorry—I didn't mean it—I was thinking of something else," said Anne

"Oh ! that 's all right—shake hands again," he said.

"I have the most friendly disposition in the world to you," said Anne ; "but just in front of the Marine Library, I think shaking hands once is enough, unless you mean to say good bye."

"No, I don't," he returned ; "which way are you walking?"

"Up to Lady Orrington's," said Anne.

"Come on, then," he said ; "I suppose you have no objection."

"Not the least," said Anne.

"I was going there myself," said Lord Inchcape. "I have got to return a pamphlet of Robert Sherwood's, which he gave me to read."

"He is going to publish?" she asked.

"Yes ; he told me to look it over, and give him my opinion on one or two points."

"I hope it is favourable," said Anne, smiling.

"Why, what do you care about Bob Sherwood?" he retorted.

"He is an old acquaintance, and the son of a very old friend," said Anne. "I wish his pamphlet all possible success."

"Well then, I tell you for your comfort, he won't get it," said Lord Inchcape. "He does not belong any more than myself to the popular party."

"I have not congratulated you," said Anne, "on your accession to—"

"Oh, yes! there's a lot to congratulate about," he said; "I am worse off than ever I was. I have left my governor in Yorkshire, and cut and run before he drove me altogether mad. He was never easy till he got me into the house; and now he is always wanting to get me out again; he says the late hours are killing me; but now I am in, there I'll stop. If he had let it alone, so would I."

"Ah! you have not learned to be grateful," said Anne.

“And then he is never tired of boring me to marry; catch me, that’s all! Once I was ready enough, and now I never will!”

Anne felt herself colour, though she laughed.

“So you bolted that evening,” he said after a pause.

“Ah! don’t you think me very forgiving to make it up after all?” asked Anne.

“Well, I am forgiving too,” he said.

“But you had nothing to forgive,” said Anne.

“Yes, I had,” he returned. “You were nearly the death of me.”

“Bob Sherwood says you are the handsomest woman in England,” he remarked, when they had walked a little farther.

“Oh! he does not know; he has not seen me these five years,” said Anne.

“Well, may I call on you?” he asked.

“I shall be very happy,” said Anne, “but as I am a single woman—”

“ Whose fault is that ? ” he asked, angrily.

“ I was not reproaching you for it, on my word,” said Anne, laughing. “ I merely wished to mention, that being at present in that forlorn condition, I receive only in the morning.”

“ Oh ! that ’s all right,” he said, “ though I don’t know what you mean by ‘at present.’ ”

She laughed, but did not explain.

“ I think you might put up your veil,” he said ; “ I don’t know how a fellow is to see you through all those black spots.”

They were standing before the door of Lady Orrington’s house. Anne threw up her veil, and turned to him with a smile.

“ Bob is right,” he said, “ however—it’s no matter.”

Lady Orrington was busy over her carpet-work ; Lord William leaning back in his chair, with his eyes half shut, was dictating to his sister, who wrote most of his letters

for him ; Lord Robert, who was looking idly out of the window, was the first to start forward and greet Anne. She then made her way to Lady Orrington.

“ What, my dear, did you walk ; are you not very tired,” said her Ladyship ; “ and where did you pick up your beau ; I shall tell Sir Arthur.”

“ I ’m not her beau,” said Lord Incheape. “ What do you blush for ? who is Sir Arthur ? ”

“ Don’t you know ? — Sir Arthur Hardwicke,” said the Marchioness.

“ That fellow Hardwicke ? ” said he, quickly ; “ I hoped he was dead—I had not heard of him this long time.” He looked very keenly at Anne ; but if she had blushed, she was quite composed again, and was talking aside to Lady Lucy.

“ I ’m so pleased, dear Anne,” said Lucy ;— “ I always liked him extremely ; the end of January, is it not ? Mamma declares

Orrington shall give you away. We go to Mote for Christmas, and then return here ; and he will most probably come back with us for a few weeks. I'm so curious to hear all about Isabel, and your interview with that hateful man ; were you frightened ? Sir Arthur says not."

"There's your paper," said Lord Inchcape, throwing the manuscript down before Lord Robert, "it's all right except one thing—you have made a mistake in a date."

"Show me," said Lord Robert ; turning the leaves.

Lord Inchcape rapped the head of his stick on a part of the page.

"What's all that about ?" asked Lady Orrington.

"A bill of attainder against one Harriet Marchioness of Orrington, for caballing with a knave called Anthony Cosset, against the health of Her Majesty's liege subjects," said Lord Robert, gravely. "Ah ! poor woman,

it is expected that she will pass the ensuing winter in the Tower—rather damp quarters for a rheumatic subject; but private feelings must of course give way on such an occasion.”

“What nonsense that boy always talks,” said her Ladyship. “Lucy, my dear, give me the floss silk.”

Sir Arthur came in,—Lord Inchcape never took his eyes off him. Sir Arthur went up to the fire-place, and stood talking with Anne and Lady Orrington, who were seated together.

After a few general remarks, Lady Orrington brought the conversation round to her favourite point.

“Why do you wait till the end of January, Sir Arthur?” she said; “it is a monstrous time.”

“So I think, Lady Orrington; it is not my arrangement, I assure you. I thought of next Wednesday.”

“And the twenty-seventh, of all the days in the year. Anne seems to have fixed the twenty-seventh positively.”

"That 's his doing," said Anne; "it's his age—it is a superstition he has—twenty-seven."

"Why it's the martyrdom—oh! no, the thirtieth. I am glad it is not the martyrdom," said Lady Orrington.

"So am I," said Sir Arthur.

"And then she talks about having such a very quiet affair," said Lady Orrington.

"His taste again," said Anne; "he likes such things very quiet."

"Why, my dear, he does not know what he likes yet; he has never been married before," replied Lady Orrington.

Anne looked up at Sir Arthur.

"I think he is a widower," she said, laughing.

He merely smiled. She found that she could say and do what she pleased; he was delighted with her every way.

"What are we all going to do?" asked Lord Robert.

"Anne rides with me, and William, and

Sir Arthur, I suppose," said Lucy, looking towards him.

Sir Arthur bowed.

"Will you dine with us, Lord Inchcape?" asked Lady Orrington.

"Shall I?" he said, appealing to Anne.

"Suppose you do," she said.

They were all used to his odd ways; they were not at all surprised at this mode of accepting an invitation.

"I wish, with all my soul, Miss Scawen, you would be equally kind to me," said Lord Robert, "and decide what I shall do with the morning."

"Why not ride with us?" asked Anne.

"If I could get a horse, I would," said Lord Robert.

"You can hire," said Lucy.

"They seem such sorry hacks," he said; "I could not get a brute that would keep up with you. If Bill were not such a screw he would offer me a mount."

"I'll lend you a horse if you wont break his knees," said Lord William; "you mostly do."

"Agreed," said Lord Robert. "Miss Scawen shall be my guardian angel."

"No, she shall not—so there," interposed Lord Inchcape; "and if you ride, so will I."

"Do, we shall be a strong party," said Lord Robert.

"Is that Mr. Clavering?" asked Sir Arthur.

"That's his *alias*," said Lord Robert. "Lord Inchcape now. I'll introduce you."

"I had the pleasure, my Lord, of meeting you in Scotland many years ago," said Sir Arthur.

"Ah! neither you nor any one else will ever meet me there again," he replied. "I hate the country."

"You did not seem very comfortable there," said Anne, as she was leaving the room with Lucy, to dress for her ride.

"I never was comfortable near you," he said.

"That's the most finished compliment, I'll engage, Miss Scawen, that you ever received," said Lord Robert, as he held the door open for her.

"How dark he's grown," said Lord Inchcape, surveying Sir Arthur, who was talking at the window with Lord William. "I wonder what she thinks of him."

"If you mean Miss Scawen, she thinks him good enough to marry," said Lord Robert; "they are engaged."

"Oh!" said Lord Inchcape.

And he took refuge in the stillest silence, which he maintained during the ride and the dinner, answering by nods and signs any remark that was made to him.

"Well, good-bye," he said, coming up to Anne, as the party was separating.

"Good-night," said Anne, holding out her hand.

"Oh! I'm going into Yorkshire—you'll not see any more of me," he replied.

"Are you?—that's a sudden resolution; you've heard no bad news, I hope," she said.

"Yes, I have. It's not your fault, I believe it is your fate, but I can't stand it—so, Anne, good-bye."

He wrung her hand and hurried out of the room.

She felt her eyes glisten—for anything of real feeling is infectious,—but Sir Arthur was waiting to lead her down stairs, and she could think of nothing sorrowful.

Lady Lucy entered with the greatest zeal into her friend's prospects, and helped her preparations forward with a warmth that amused Lady Orrington, who constantly exclaimed, with unfeigned sincerity,—

"I wish, my dear, your time was come! I would give anything to see you choosing your own *trousseau*!"

Very different from Agnes; who, though she was married a great deal better than she deserved, grudged Sir Arthur to Anne. She always fancied that a man was withdrawn from her circle of admirers if he married; and if she could have hindered it, I believe she would.

Mrs. Morton was in a state of ecstasy at the news; she thought, of the two, it was a more romantic affair than if Anne had chosen Lord Inchcape: she longed to renew her acquaintance with King Arthur,—and a number of civil messages passed between them, through the medium of Anne's letters.

Meantime, while Anne was selecting her wedding-dresses, Sir Arthur was engaged in a correspondence with Colonel Mordaunt, to effect a regular separation between him and Mrs. Mordaunt,—that worthy gentleman being now at Dieppe with Mademoiselle Fanchon, on account of some little pecuniary annoyances, to which he was liable in his native land.

But the negotiation was cut short by an

unexpected incident. A trifling accident which occurred while driving the *danseuse* out in a *calèche*, made it advisable that the Colonel should be bled. He had long been in the habit of eating and drinking more than was good for him: the vein inflamed, and in twenty four hours he was dead. "And serve him right," as Lady Orrington said, when Sir Arthur informed her of his sister's bereavement. "I'm not expected to write Isabel a letter of condolence, I suppose. Do you mean to put on a crape hat-band? I wouldn't if I were you."

"Some of *us* ought to put on the hat-band," said Lord Robert; "you, for instance, my dear Madam: Lucy might pin one to your green velvet bonnet. The Colonel did us a good turn in running off with Mademoiselle Fanchon from Dalmayne, who was in two minds whether he should marry her."

"He will do it now," said Lord William, "and she would suit him very well."

Miss Elder looked forward to the marriage with a sort of timid pleasure. She was rejoiced that her pupil was engaged to a man who was evidently devoted to her, and she was favourably impressed by that air of superiority which is stamped on some persons even when they are too reserved to express much of their sentiments, but she had a horror of military men, natural to people who find themselves in a place where a regiment is quartered, where all sorts of atrocious and vulgar actions are constantly ascribed to the officers, it is to be hoped sometimes without foundation; and it was not till Sir Arthur got rid of his commission and his moustaches, that she felt at all confident her dear Anne's happiness was in safe keeping.

There was one thing that Anne most earnestly desired which she hardly had the assurance to propose to Sir Arthur; this was, that they should make Datchley their re-

sidence instead of Elmington. Datchley was associated with her earliest feelings, with her joys and sorrows, in no common degree, and the idea of leaving it would have been to her the same wrench that leaving father and mother is to other women on their marriage. But the moment she mentioned it, he acceded at once; in any case he said he would have conformed to her wishes, but in this instance he made no sacrifice. He had never looked on Elmington as his future home; the unexpected death of two of his brothers had put him in possession of it, but he had no preference for the place, and he would take measures to have it let.

To reward him for this concession, Anne told him the whole history of her unfortunate misapprehension respecting him and his brother, which struck her as so absurd when it was once cleared up, that she never meant to have said a word about it. He was very much interested and amused also at some of

the scenes she related, which she did with great point and spirit, and insisted on every minute particular of her interviews with his brother. Miss Elder was quite surprised at the laughing that went on that morning, for most of their discourses were very quiet and serious.

She now saw a good deal of Captain Hardwicke, who was very pleasant and obliging, though he kept her in a state of anxiety by carrying on a great flirtation with Mrs. Lascelles—however, it came to nothing, and his acquaintance with Anne did him some good, for everybody agreed he had never been so quiet so long together. Lord William always remarked that he would be steady enough when he had sown his wild oats. His friends sometimes wished that he would be a little quicker about it. But Anne knew that Lord William would defend him if he had robbed a church, because he was so extremely like Isabel.

The wedding took place on the 27th of January, the anniversary of her former marriage.

They first went to Elmington, that Anne might make up her mind definitely as to her permanent home ; and the place was so beautiful that if she had not had a deep-seated affection for Datchley, her resolution might have been shaken. Then they proceeded to Weymouth where they were joined by Mrs. Mordaunt (Miss Elder had taken up her abode quietly at Datchley), and made a progress together along the southern coast. It was found that Isabel would have a few hundreds a year left out of the wreck of as many thousands, — Colonel Mordaunt's property ; and she talked of going to live in Wales. But Anne insisted so vehemently on her residing with them at Datchley, that she consented, for the present at any rate.

Lord William promised them a visit in the summer, when he was to bring Lady Lucy from town, and to stay with her as long

as he could. Whenever this was mentioned before Isabel, she used to remark that Lord William's grand airs did not impose upon *her*, and she only wondered what Arthur could see to like in him. And as Lord William frequently took occasion to assure his sister (when she did not ask him), that Mrs. Mordaunt was not at all his style, and that he wondered how any man could marry a widow, it is to be presumed that each thought a good deal about the other, and that when the proper time came, it would be made evident.

It was a fine evening in spring that the party arrived at Datchley.

Towser was in a perfect whirlwind of courtesies and shrill exclamations. Anne's fashionable maid thought her an unknown animal, and shrank from her in the passages.

"Oh, my lady!" said Towser, when she found herself alone with Anne, in her dress-

ing-room, "didn't me and Master George defend the house beautiful! We scoured the old Spanish rifle and the two carbines, and had them always on the hall-table: and we had a chain to the door—you may see it hanging there now. Mrs. Mordaunt used to call me a grenadier when she see me marching round the house with a carbine, before we locked up for the night. She showed me to Sir Arthur, when he come down, and he patted me on the head. He thought I was a little girl."

"What a pity, Towser, that your valour was never put to the proof," said Anne.

"Yes, Miss Anne; that's what Master George said. I think I shall have Master George, after all, my lady. Missis says she has no objection, if you have none."

"And what does Master George say, Towser?"

"Oh, bless you, my lady! Master George will be glad enough: he can't get on anyhow

without my stories of foreign parts. But I shall not be in a hurry, I can tell him !”

Anne, however, was in a hurry ; for Towser bullied the new lady's-maid so dreadfully that it was impossible they could long remain in the same house ; so she gave her a handsome outfit and a hundred pound note to begin housekeeping, and dismissed her to the Homestead ; where they always called her Towser, as her husband and his mother were termed by her, Missis, and Master George.

The next day was Sunday, and they all walked to the village church. After service they lingered in the pew till Mr. Morton was disrobed, for Anne could not wait till to-morrow to see the Mortons, so anxious was she to present Sir Arthur to them.

Mrs. Morton was all smiles and congratulations. “ I made the match, Sir Arthur, recollect that,” she said.

“ I believe you did, Mrs. Morton,” he said ; “ at least, you did not hinder it.”

"Take care he does not come and reproach you some day," said Anne, smiling.

As they walked down the aisle, Sir Arthur looked all round the church, gravely, as was his wont.

"Have you a monument here to your brother?" he said in a low voice, to Anne.

"Not here," said Anne; "a little further on. I will show you."

The party walked across the churchyard into the meadows beyond. Presently they came to a row of pretty gothic alms-houses, newly built. Over the centre porch there was a tablet with an inscription. Anne stopped, and pointed it out to Sir Arthur.

"Like all that you do," he said, pressing her hand which rested on his arm.

"How are we to take that?" asked Isabel.

Anne seemed to know. She looked up in his face with a tearful smile.

"You have got a treasure, Sir Arthur!" said the warm-hearted Mrs. Morton.

"I think I have found that out," he said, very quietly, and looked up again at the inscription.

It was very simple:

A. D. 1837.

These Alms-houses, for eight poor women, were built by

ANNE LASCELLES SCAWEN,

In ~~Memorp~~ Memory

Of her beloved brother,

HUGH LASCELLES SCAWEN,

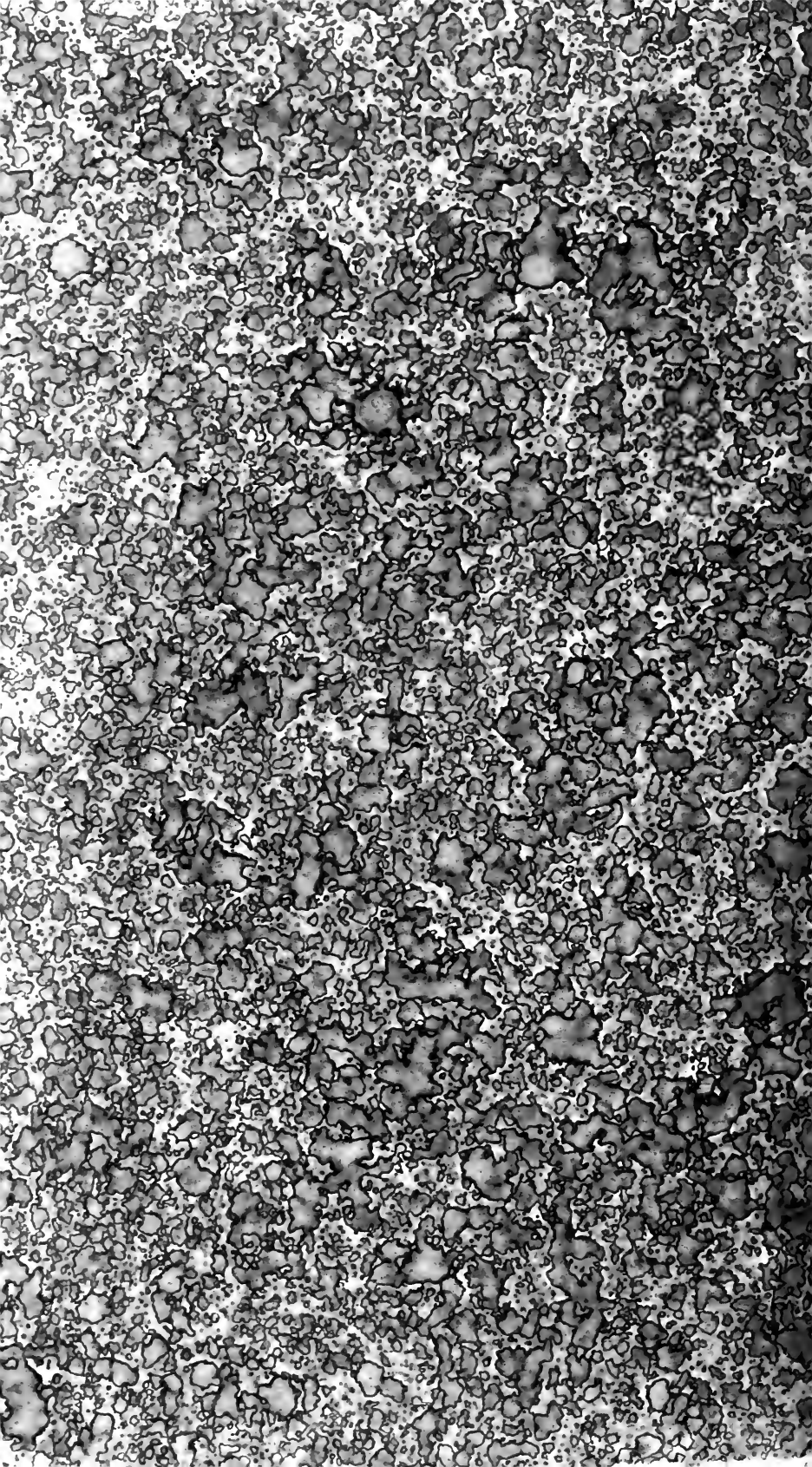
Drowned at Sea, Dec. 5th, 1832.

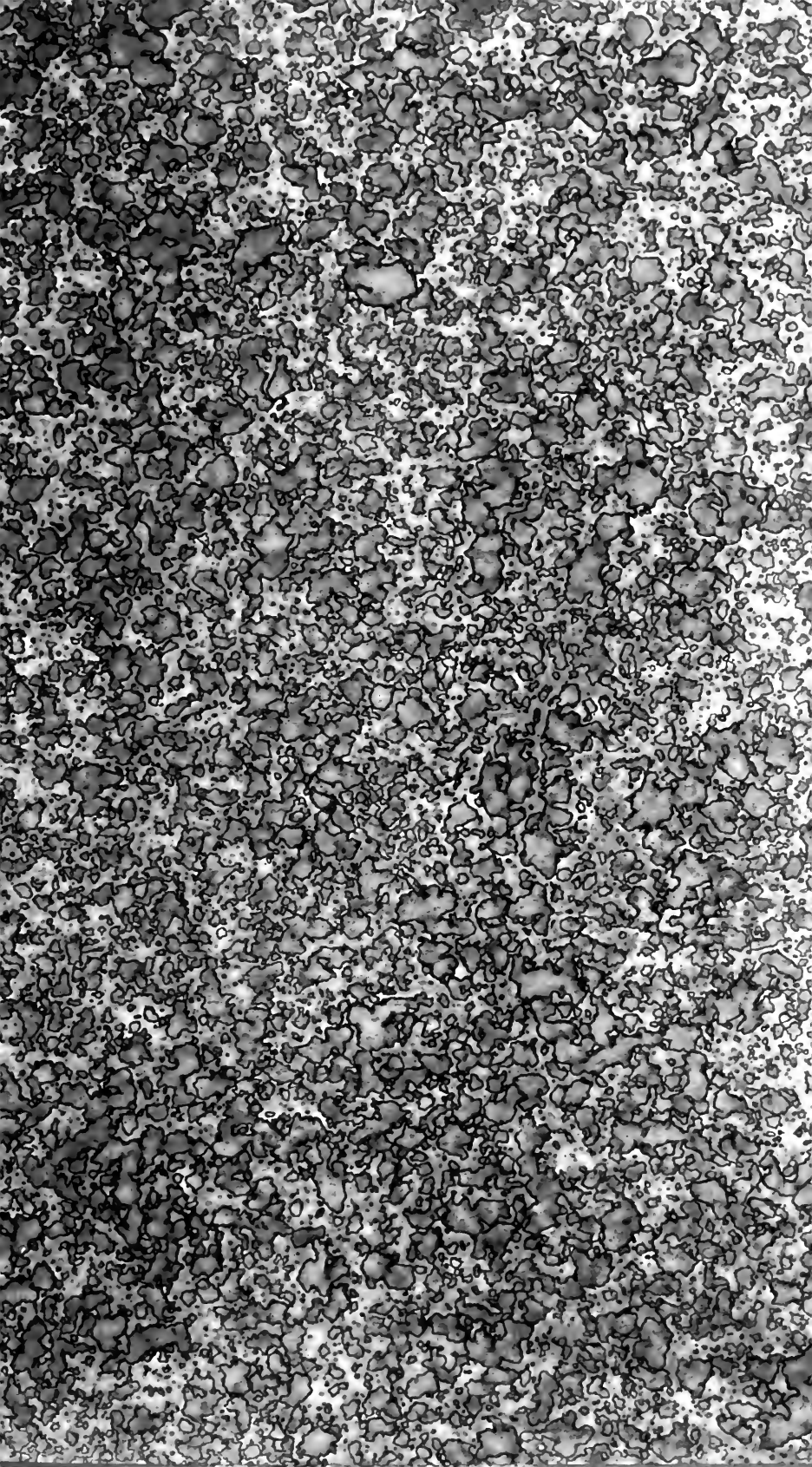
"And so thou bringest them unto the Haven where they would be."

THE END.









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